

**5 2 8 4 6**

















The greatest book of the age on spiritual life

# GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(By 'M' a direct disciple of the Master)

IN TWO VOLUMES

To gain a real understanding of the personality and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, there is no better book than this. 'M', an eminent disciple of his, wrote this wonderful book on the basis of the diary he used to keep for recording the conversations of the Master. It presents Sri Ramakrishna's teachings in a dramatic setting, giving a vivid pen-picture of the occasions when they were delivered and the persons who listened to them. It is in the form of conversations and reads like a novel, but there is no problem of Spiritual Life that does not find a solution therein.

"The move is quite original and never was the life of a great Teacher brought before the public untarnished by the writer's mind, as you are doing..... I am really in a transport when I read them."—*Swami Vivekananda*.

**Price Each Volume, Cloth Rs. 2-8, Gilt Rs. 3.**

---

## FIRST COMPLETE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD WITH THE COMMENTARY OF SRI SANKARACHARYA

By **SWAMI MADHAYANANDA**

(Formerly Head of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, and the Vedanta Society,  
San Francisco)

*Containing:* The Text of the Upanishad in Devanagari, a lucid and faithful English translation of the Text and the Commentary, relevant notes, references to quotations and an Index.

**About 1000 Pages]**    **Excellent get-up.**    **[Price Rs. 6 only.**

**Sri Ramakrishna Math**

**Mylapore**

**MADRAS**

SEN 4 MESS

## Works of Swami Paramananda

### (AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS)

**Soul's Secret Door, Poems (Flexible)** Rs. 2-8-0. "The book sheds an almost tonic sense of Peace and Repose."—*Evening Post*, New York.

**Book of Daily Thoughts & Prayer**—Each page containing the salient thoughts for the day. Pp. Dy. 8vo. 400, Price Rs. 4

**The Vigil (Flexible)** Rs. 3: (cloth) Rs. 2-8. 'Mysticism in its truest form finds expression here.' *Buffalo Courier*. (With a Portrait of the Author.)

#### PRACTICAL SERIES

- (1) Faith as a Constructive Force.
- (2) Creative Power of Silence.
- (3) Spiritual Healing.
- (4) Secret of Right Activity.
- (5) Self Mastery.

At Re. 1-8 each.

#### CO-OPERATIVE STUDY SERIES

- (1) Emerson and Vedanta.
- (2) Christ and Oriental Ideals.
- (3) Plato and Vedic Idealism.

At Re. 1 each.

#### BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

		Rs. A.			Rs. A.
My Creed ...	...	2 8	Universal Ideal of Religion	0 7	
Rhythm of Life ...	...	2 8	Principles and Purpose of		
The Way of Peace and			Vedanta ...	0 7	
Blessedness ...	...	1 12	Science & Practice of Yoga	0 4	
The Path of Devotion ...	...	1 12	Harvest-field of Life ...	0 4	
Vedanta in Practice ...	...	1 12	Yoga and Christian Mystics	0 4	
do (paper) ...	...	1 0	Civilization & Spiritualism	0 4	
Reincarnation and			Glorifying Pain & Adversity	0 4	
Immortality ...	...	1 8	Prayer cards (6 varieties)		
Problem of Life and			each ...	0 2	
Death ...	...	0 8	Right Resolution ...	0 8	
Power of Thought ...	...	0 7	Healing Meditation ...	0 12	

#### THE MANAGER,

"The Vedanta Kesari", Mylapore, Madras.

### SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG

A charming presentation of the wonderful life of an ideal householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, popularly known as Nag Mahashay. Demonstrates to what heights a man can rise even while remaining in household life.

"I have travelled in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashay"—says *Swami Vivekananda*.

**Pp. 170. Boards Re. 1. To Sub. "V. K." As. 14-**



# THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR ”

**VOL. XXI.**

**MAY 1934—APRIL 1935**



**PUBLISHED BY**

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH,**

**MYLAPORE, MADRAS.**

**Inland annually, Rs. 3.**

**Foreign annually, Rs. 4-8.**

**Single Copy, As. 6.**

**(\$ 2 or Sh. 8.)**

**EDITORS : SWAMI AMRITESWARANANDA AND SWAMI TAPASYANANDA**

**PUBLISHER : SWAMI HRISHIKESANANDA**

Account No.	52846
Class No.	
Amount	25.9.03
Unit	am.
Check	✓
Card	✓
Card	PC
Card	AP

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

## Vol. XXI

### INDEX

	PAGE
Advertisement and its Challenge	
<i>Editorial</i> ... ..	165
Ananda-Brahma-Vada	
<i>By Prof. Akshay Kumar Banerjea, M. A.</i> ... ..	14, 59, 97
Ananda, Relative and Absolute	
<i>By Prof. Akshay Kumar Banerjea, M. A.</i> ... ..	373
Angelic Forms and the Formless, Behind—	
<i>Editorial</i> ... ..	85
Ashramas of the Present Day	
<i>Editorial</i> ... ..	364
Austerity's Lure	
<i>By S N Suta</i> ... ..	73
Buddha and Sankaracharya	
<i>By Swami Ranganathananda</i> ... ..	93
Buddhism, Fundamentals of—	
<i>By A. C. Banerjea</i> ... ..	18
Concept and Reality	
<i>By Anagarica Govinda</i> ... ..	174
Death, The Import of—	
<i>By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A.</i> ... ..	214
Early Buddhism, The Goal in—	
<i>By Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A.</i> ... ..	335
Forest Trees, Under the—	
<i>Editorial</i> ... ..	125
Formalism, The Menace of—	
<i>By R. Ramakrishnan, M. A., L. T.</i> ... ..	340
Gautama, the Enlightened One	
<i>By Swami Ranganathananda</i> ... ..	64
Gita, The message of the—	
<i>By Swami Ranganathananda</i> ... ..	453

	PAGE
God-Consciousness and Love	
<i>By K. Natesa Ayyar, M. A.</i>	264
Great Sayings, The Four—	
<i>By Dr. S. Banerjee</i>	426
Himalayan Tirthas, Pilgrimage to—	
<i>By Swami Chidbhavananda</i>	259
Hindu Ethics	1, 41, 81, 121, 161, 201, 241, 281, 321, 361, 401, 441
Holy Mother, Reminiscences of the—	
<i>By A Disciple</i>	11, 55, 91, 131, 171, 211, 250, 292, 331, 371, 412
India has meant to me, What?—	
<i>By Sister Christine</i>	178
Indian Metaphysics, Later—	
<i>By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.</i>	104
Indian Metaphysics To-day	
<i>By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.</i>	135
Intensity, Moments of—	
<i>By Chandra, M. A.</i>	189
Iswara	
<i>By Prof. Nicholas Roerich</i>	295
Krishna, Glimpses of—	
<i>By S. N. Suta</i>	271
Krishna in the Gita, Sri—	
<i>By Swami Ranganathananda</i>	385
Mahavir—An Ideal Devotee	
<i>By Swami Jagadiswarananda</i>	421
Mandukyopanishad	
<i>By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau</i>	31, 113, 153, 311, 349, 393, 427, 467
Messenger of Light, A—	
<i>Editorial</i>	405
Mood that reads aright, The—	
<i>Editorial</i>	204
Moral Education: Its Ideal and Practice, Our	
Experiments in—	
<i>By Swami Yatiswarananda</i>	416, 462

News and Reports	... 40, 119, 159, 199, 238, 318, 358, 399, 438, 479	
Notes and Comments	... 34, 77, 115, 153, 193, 231, 276, 314, 351, 396, 431, 471	
Obituary Notes	... 316, 356, 398	
Pilgrimage to the Inner Shrine, The— <i>By Sheo Narayan Lal Shrivastava, M. A.</i>	...      ...	51
Prayers of the Prachetas, The— <i>By Swami Prabhavananda</i>	...      ...	139
Public Libraries Public, Are Our ?— <i>By Prof. K. S. Srikantan, M. A., F. R. E. S.</i> (London)	...      ...	381
Public Life, True and Spurious <i>By Dr. S. Banerjee</i>	...      ...	309
Purva Mimamsa, Verbal Testimony in— <i>By Pt. R. S. Venkatarama Shastri, M. A.</i>	...      ...	225
Ramakrishna, The Great Master, Sri— <i>By Swami Saradananda</i>	... 2, 42, 82, 122, 162, 202, 242, 282, 322, 362, 402, 442	
Religion and Life's Harmony <i>By Prof. S. C. Sen Gupta, M. A.</i>	...      ...	300
'Religion and Philosophy in India,' Why not ?— <i>Editorial</i>	...      ...	444
Religious Life, Self-labelling in— <i>Editorial</i>	...      ...	44
Reverence that Saved <i>By S. N. Suta</i>	...      ...	26
Reviews and Notices	... 37, 116, 158, 197, 234, 279, 317, 357, 398, 435, 478	
Saint and Poet of Kerala, A Householder— <i>By M. S. Krishna Aiyar, B. A., B. L.</i>	...      ...	185
Saiva Siddhanta, Later Indian Metaphysics— <i>By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.</i>	...      ...	20
Sannyasin, The Song of— <i>By Swami Nityananda Bharati</i>	...      ...	110, 228

			PAGE
Shankara : A Day Dream			
<i>By Ernest P. Horowitz</i>	...	...	222
Shankara—A Philosopher			
<i>By C. Mahadeviah</i>	...	...	338
Siva, The Ideal of—			
<i>By R. Ramakrishnan, M. A., L. T.</i>	...	...	106
Spiritual Aristocracy, A—			
<i>By A. S.</i>	...	...	28
Spiritual Life, Types of Responses in—			
<i>Editorial</i>	...	...	285, 324
Traditional Method and the Modern Seeker			
<i>Editorial</i>	...	...	5
Trishodadhi or the Story of a Tapaswi's Fall			
<i>By Kaundinya</i>	...	...	100, 151
Tuning and After it, Before—			
<i>Editorial</i>	...	...	244
Vedanta, Disciplinary Prelude to the Study of—			
<i>By Sheonarayan Lal Srivastava, M. A.</i>	...	...	218
Village, Religion and Art of the—			
<i>By A. Swaminatha Iyer, B. A.</i>	...	...	266
Village Windows, From—			
<i>By Swami Nirlepananda</i>	...	303, 346, 389, 459	
World of Modern Thought, Pilgrimage of Faith in the—			
<i>By Swami Bhutesananda</i>	...	...	141, 180
World, What is wrong with the—?			
<i>By A. S.</i>	...	...	69
Zoroastrianism			
<i>By K. D. Choksy</i>	...	...	253



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

---

VOL. XXI]

MAY, 1934

[No. 1

---

## HINDU ETHICS



न ते चालयितुं शक्यो धर्मव्याहारकारिणः ।  
न तेषां भिद्यते वृत्तं यन् पुरा साधुभिः कृतम् ॥  
न धनार्थं यशोऽर्थं वा धर्मस्तेषां युधिष्ठिर ।  
अवश्यं कार्यं इत्येव शरीरस्य क्रियास्तथा ॥  
न भयं क्रोधचापल्ये न शोकस्तेषु विद्यते ।  
न धर्मध्वजिनश्चैव न गुणं किञ्चिदास्थिताः ॥

The promoters of righteousness will withstand successfully all attempts to force them away from the path of virtue. Their conduct, conformable to the model set by the righteous men of old, can never be otherwise.

They never acquire virtue, O Yudhishtira, for the sake of wealth or fame. They acquire it, on the other hand, because it is a duty like that of cherishing the body.

Fear, wrath, restlessness and sorrow dwell not in them. Theirs is not the outward garb of religion for misleading their fellowmen. There is no mystery with them.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLVIII, 26, 29 and 30)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

*All the sacred scriptures reveal this truth that the requisite powers of the Guru can be manifested in a person only when his false ego is destroyed.*

THUS it is quite obvious that inasmuch as the Master was able to discard his false or limited ego completely, he could become such an appropriate instrument for the manifestation of the Cosmic Ego or the powers of the Divine Mother. Inasmuch as he could look upon himself as the lowest of the low, by divesting himself of the least trace of the false ego, the World-Saviour aspect of the Divine Mother could manifest in him with such unique fullness. The religious history of the world stands as eternal evidence to the fact that in the lives of all prophets of all faiths this power and attitude of the Guru always appeared with the destruction of the false ego.

From time immemorial we are hearing that attaining spirituality or God-realisation is not possible so long as one looks upon the teacher as a human being. "Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Shiva the Supreme Lord," such are the hymns we are ever reciting whether with sincere belief or without it, in honour of the Guru, the initiator into the spiritual life. Many are there, again, who in consequence of the spell of their foreign education have thrown overboard their nation-

al culture and ideals and, considering this kind of deification of human beings as a mortal sin, raise vehement protest against such practice.

*The attitude of the Guru is not ascribable to human beings. It is the Power of God Himself, manifested through the instruments of human body and mind.*

For, who cares to know that the personality of the Guru, though manifested through the human body, does not belong to the world of humanity? Who cares to understand that as air, water, food and similar daily necessities serve as means to the preservation of life, so, the Divine Mother fully manifests Herself in the form of the powers and attitude of the Guru, through the mind, pure, illumined and purged of egotism, in order to bring peace and amelioration to the souls tormented with miseries and hedged round in ignorance? Or again, who cares to know that a person becomes a worthy instrument for such divine manifestation to the extent to which he can rid himself of the false ego? In ordinary beings this Divine Power manifests only in minute fractions, therefore we fail to comprehend it clearly. But when a person is so fortunate as to meet with its marvellous display in such great personalities as Lord Sri Krishna, Buddha, Chaitanya, Sankara, Jesus and other prophets of



the past epochs and Sri Ramakrishna in the present era, at once he realises in the very core of his heart that this Power comes, not from man, but directly from God Himself. The aspiring soul that was so long straying away from the right path and being afflicted with the malady of incessant births and deaths, is in no time purged of ignorance and impurities by his contact with this Divine Power. The emancipated soul then exclaims, "My Master, Thou art never a human being. Thou art God Himself."

*God out of His mercy, assumes the form of the Guru and removes ignorance from human minds. Therefore the devotion to the Guru and that to God mean one and the same thing.*

Thus we understand that the attitude or the power of the Guru is nothing other than that aspect of the Divine Mother which frees human minds from all ignorance and impurities. The scriptures refer to this same Divine Aspect as the Guru and teach us to have implicit faith in, and sincere devotion to, It. But, for an ordinary human being with gross intellect, who has but just begun to have faith and devotion, it is not possible to accurately comprehend, or pour his love on, an abstract idea. That is why the scriptures direct us to revere the initiator into the spiritual life as the Guru. Now to those people who hold that they can show their regard to the Guru, the Divine Power, but not to the body through

which this Power manifests, inasmuch as it is not ascribable to this particular body,—we reply : "Well brothers, if you can have devotion to this Divine Power alone as distinguished from the vehicle through which It is manifested, do so by all means. But be on your guard that you may not be deceived by your mind. The Divine Power we call the Guru, and the instrument through which It works, are just like fire and its heat which you have never seen existing independently of each other. How, then, you will accept and revere the one and reject the other, we do not know. If a person loves or reveres another, he holds in esteem even the most insignificant things if they are associated with the object of his love or reverence. To a sincerely devoted soul even a flower or a piece of cloth, that is touched or used by the object of reverence, is a sacred thing. Nay, even the ground over which the beloved one walks, is of immense value. Is it then necessary to explain any further why the body where the Guru, that is, the Divine Power, resides in order to accept the offerings of the devotee and shower His Mercy on him, is looked upon by the pupil as worthy of faith and devotion? Those alone who do not rightly understand what this attitude of the Guru is, consider the body of the Guru as of little importance. On the other hand, persons possessed of genuine devotion to the Guru will certainly have great reverence for his body as well. The Master

would illustrate this truth with the story of Vibhishana as follows :

*The Master's Teaching regarding Devotion to the Guru. The Illustration of Vibhishana's Devotion.*

Once upon a time, long after the play of Sri Ramachandra on the earth as a human being had been over, a boat was wrecked near Lanka and one of the men on board was cast by the waves on the shore of the island. The immortal Vibhishana is ruling over Lanka all these ages. The news of the man's arrival reached him in due course. At the mention of the soft human body, a rare delicacy, the mouths of many of the Rakshasas began to water ; but king Vibhishana was filled with an unusual emotion. With eyes overflowing with tears and voice choked with the feeling of devotion, he went on repeating again and again, " Oh my good luck! Oh my good luck! " The Rakshasas could not understand his feelings and therefore were one and all struck with wonder. At last he explained to them the reason of his exaltation. " After a long long time," said he, " I shall be able to see once again the same human form which my Sri Ramachandra assumed when He set His foot on this land and favoured me with His Grace. Is it a matter of small fortune? It appears to me as if Sri Ramachandra Himself has come here again in this form." Forthwith he hurried with all the courtiers to the shore and escorted the man to the palace with profound love and respect. The man was then seated on the throne and the king

with all the retinue waited upon him as obedient servants. Having thus entertained him in Lanka for some days, the king, at last, with tearful eyes, allowed him to return to his home, loaded with rich presents and escorted by the king's followers.

*When an aspirant attains genuine devotion, even the most insignificant things remind him of God. Lord Chaitanya was merged into ecstasy with the thought, 'This is the earth of which drums are made.'*

After narrating this story the Master would again say : " This is what happens when the devotion is genuine. Even the most ordinary things make the devotee remember God and lose himself in Him. Have you not heard how Lord Chaitanya was merged in Samadhi with the appearance of the thought, ' This is the earth of which drums are made ' ? Once, while passing through a village Sri Chaitanya came to know that the inhabitants of that village earned their living by making drums. At once he exclaimed, ' This is the earth of which drums are made, ' and immediately lost all external consciousness. For, he thought, out of that earth drums are made and these are used in congregational music ; and the music, again, is in praise of God who is the Soul of our souls, the Beauty of beauties. So many ideas came together in a flash and the mind was at once rivetted upon God. Likewise, when one has true devotion to the Guru, he will certainly be reminded of the Guru by the sight of the Guru's

relatives. Not only that. Even if his eyes happen to meet only the co-villagers of the Guru, his thoughts are at once directed to the Guru himself. Constantly he prostrates before them, sprinkles his body with the dust from their feet, feeds them sumptuously and renders all other services to them. At this stage the disciple fails to see any defects in the Guru. Now only can he say, 'Even if my Guru frequent ale-houses, he is the Lord, the

Eternal Bliss all the same.' Otherwise, a human being cannot but be a mixture of virtues and vices. But the disciple, on account of his devotion, no longer sees man as man but as God Himself, just as one sees everything as yellow, due to his jaundiced eye. His devotion then reveals to him that God alone is everything; it is He that has become the master, the father and the mother, man and beast, the sentient and the non-sentient."

## TRADITIONAL METHOD AND THE MODERN SEEKER

### Misdirection of Energy

**H**OW to enable men to overcome their weaknesses, round up their personality and tune it permanently to a divine key: this has been the problem the various religions have attempted to solve. Of the methods taught by them the majority have been connected with philosophical systems working on the principle of One Unknown only, namely God, Personal or Impersonal, or upon Two Unknowns or more, as for example, Matter and Spirit; or Individual Soul, the World and the Supreme Soul. Refusing to be caught, beyond healthy limits, by the polemics of the different systems, when we analyse the devotional and other exercises prescribed by each, we find innumerable striking similarities among them, perhaps similarities more than divergences, and certainly greater reasons for toleration, friendship and reverence than for quarrels

and efforts at mutual extermination. Knowing, as we all do, the amount of struggle necessary for building up admittedly virtuous habits, it is indeed a wonder how we can frequently lose all sense of proportion and indulge in hacking one another to pieces, in a plane of theories relating to the superiority of particular sets of Unknowns, wasting to that extent the time and energy available for quiet practice. Meditative life appears impossible for most of us, not because we do not get enough time to devote to it, as we often like to complain, but because we have a wrong sense of values, which we do not pause to view critically, and we consequently fail to realise in which directions preventable wastage is constantly taking place. Success in meditative life depends upon our finding out and effectively stopping such sources of wastage and learning to utilise the time and energy gained in this

way for systematic constructive work within.

### **Attitude towards Sources of Instruction**

As the desire to lead a controlled life waxes strong, its constant pressure usually forces the aspirant to seek assistance from without. The ultimate truth may be that all knowledge is within, and that what he imagines to be helps got from outside are really simple stimuli which tap the enormous reserves of his mind and occasion therein a most natural domestic arrangement, destined even otherwise to be brought about sooner or later. But this explanation by no means goes against our common experience that people do look for guidance from external sources when, rightly or wrongly from the ultimate standpoint, they feel that there is something higher to be attained and that their internal equipment is insufficient, at least for the time, to lead them towards it. Fortunate are those who, in this eager search, light upon some one who assures them of success, revives their confidence and shows them where and in what manner they might safely take their first step. Seldom, however, do these benefactors make their appearance with any official formality, or as some do fancy, with a perceptible "wakening light." That aspirant, therefore, who would care to throw open the windows of his mind only when such signs are noticeable, would undoubtedly miss the influence felt and absorbed by people of more

receptive moods. Success, in fact, comes with less delay to those who adopt a reverential attitude towards all sources of instruction that might become available, not merely at the commencement of the quest, but also at any moment subsequent to it.

In illustration of this, we might well recall to mind an incident in the story of Utanka as given in the Mahabharata. Relying on the justice of his cause and the purity of his life in general, Utanka resorted to a simple stick alone in his attempt to dig his way into the underworld, after Takshaka who had escaped thither, stealing the ear-rings he had in his charge. Indra, the Lord of the celestials, looking down from high heaven, admired the high resolve of the youth and graciously drove into his totally inadequate tool the irresistible strength of his own weapon, the thunderbolt. The earth then rapidly gave way before the mortal's strokes and Utanka stepped triumphantly into the world of the serpents; but his success would have ended there, had he been too proud to listen respectfully to an apparently ordinary person who rode up to him on horseback and enquired what he wanted. Saluting him and obeying his behest, Utanka simply blew into the horse,—a very insignificant act compared with his ambitious scheme of conquering the snake-world—and behold! from every aperture in the animal's body there suddenly issued forth such deadly flames and smoke that the frightened Takshaka submitted and

returned the jewels. Whatever may be the nature of the quest, the open mind does profit by instruction from outside and achieve its object the sooner for it.

### **No Incompatibility**

The modern mind, however, refuses to sell what it considers its independence by trusting to the counsels of living persons, who must all be fallible by nature, but is prepared on the other hand to venture alone into the vast ocean of literature on the subject of mind control, where it will gladly fish for itself from the areas coming periodically within its reach. The genuine seeker who thinks it shameful to wait passively for a gratuitous divine or human push every now and then, but heroically prefers to set out and do his best, irrespective of the pains his quest might bring, has certainly admirable mettle in him and will scarcely come to serious grief in the long run. But how does this attitude of self-reliance become incompatible with the receiving of instruction from persons who have been longer in the spiritual field, and who may therefore be expected to know, if not its straight paths, at least many of its numerous pitfalls? Sacred literature is, after all, nothing but the voice of the teachers of the past, and if living teachers are avoided on the ground of their fallibility and their incapacity to divine the needs of the aspirant, it is difficult to see how without violation to one's principle one can deign to listen to the preserved voices of the

dead. The contradiction involved in such a procedure, it may be argued, vanishes since the right of rejection, the assumed prerogative of an independent spirit, still remains with the aspirant and the ancient books are treated only as so much raw material, out of which the portions appearing reasonable alone are going to be accepted. The difficulty would persist, nevertheless; for there seems to be no justification, even on this valuation, to shut out the suggestions of living teachers from the bulk of raw material taken up for consideration.

### **No Undue Compulsion**

No one denies the efficacy of the aspirant's reliance on his power of reasoning and of his acting on the strength of his convictions alone. On the contrary they are recognised as qualities hard to get, and they do certainly help the struggling man in avoiding many a pitfall which awaits over-emotional and sentimental people. Indeed, analysis will even reveal that the majority of failures in meditative life are traceable to the lack of a judicious application of the power of reasoning in the different stages of spiritual practice. All teachers worth the name have given in the past, and do give in the present, every facility, not of course for whimsical rejection of any suggestion, but for the healthy exercise and the consequent gradual unfoldment of the aspirant's power of discrimination. Let us not forget in this connection the valuable passage of the Gita, विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा

कुरु : “ *Having reflected on these things fully, adopt the course thou likest best.* ” These words falling from the lips of Lord Krishna after He had discoursed upon all the points raised by Arjuna’s attitude and verbal expressions of doubt, and also after He had shown him a vision of His Glorious Divine Form, are typical of the non-compelling manner generally adopted by competent teachers. A careful study of such books as portray the relations between disciples and their preceptors will show, in addition, that in all cases where the individuality of the disciple has been strong, and the power of his intellect keen, evolution into a wider and more discerning state of awareness has been achieved only after a protracted struggle. “I fought my Guru,” says the Swami Vivekananda, “for six long years ”; and the result was that he knew every inch of the ground.

### **Benefit derived from Teachers**

Turning now to the literature dealing with practical steps, we shall find that the independent seeker has plenty to master and choose from. The path of devotion which trains the aspirant to expand his natural affections and direct them Godward, has been stressed by all religions and expounded with a thoroughness that makes it easy for anybody, who will use his normal power of discrimination, to chalk out a routine for his daily practice. Other possible paths, which pitch upon special outstanding virtues of the individual, as for instance, a

passion for service, as convenient starting points for systematic discipline have also been analysed, classified and elaborately discussed by various sets of teachers. We have thus the paths of action, of discrimination and of meditation, all of which lay down definite methods to be adopted by the aspirant, whom tradition requires to act under the supervision of a competent preceptor. Under expert guidance it is possible for the aspirant to introduce into his daily life a few simple items calculated to clarify his general outlook, while at the same time he can, with an assurance of eventual self-mastery, plunge into the field of religious writings to select therefrom the ideas relevant to the stages ahead of him. Guidance of this type does not, however, guarantee immunity from mental conflicts or eliminate the necessity of painful struggles to get over them when they come. A minimum of struggle is in fact inevitable for overcoming the resistance which even a relatively virtuous outlook will surely present to any attempt at giving it some tangible expansion. The advantage of the teacher’s company lies mainly in the fact that unnecessary conflicts can be clean avoided and that the aspirant can quickly learn to detect his mistakes by personal observation of the principles on which criticisms are offered on his changing responses.

The independent seeker, on the other hand, left to his own resources, has to learn by experiment

## TRADITIONAL METHOD AND THE MODERN SEEKER

what methods would be most suitable at the various stages of his evolution. Experience shows that it is not often that the diagnosis he makes of his tendencies and inner needs can turn out to be correct. For the surface mind can, and does, deceive to a great extent. Frequently we find that people, who have been gradually unfolding along the devotional path, come across, for example, a lucid and able presentation of the path of discrimination and the glories promised to its votaries, and are forthwith swayed into attempting revolutionary changes in their habits and outlook. With an initial equipment of an open mind, a sufficiently subtle faculty of discrimination and a facility in applying it, the dangers attendant upon such changes may be minimised. Or, as is more probable, the changes themselves may be perceived as totally uncalled for. But this capacity presupposes a considerable amount of progress; and the problem before the raw beginner is not how to regulate himself from such an advanced stage, but how to attain that very stage itself. Hindu philosophers who view progress as extending, if necessary, from one life into another, would confront us with the argument that such a high attainment is nothing but the manifestation in this life, of what had already been achieved under the direct supervision of a teacher in the life previous, and that the beginner has therefore no other alternative than to follow the traditional

method. Anyway, till actual experience teaches the seeker the futility of such violent changes, there is bound to be, taking even the most favourable view of the consequences, at least a considerable set-back to his further progress.

### Hurry for Short Cuts

In fact, it is difficult for an aspirant in the earlier stages to get over the idea of these paths as so many air-tight compartments, some of which, by turns, appear to him to promise the easiest course and the greatest benefit. The goal of spiritual life is vaguely considered as capable of giving him, in a very refined state of course, an unlimited quantity of the pleasures with which he has been familiar in ordinary life. This goal, besides, he wishes to attain in as short a time as possible so that he may enter betimes upon the blissful and eternal holiday which, he fancies, must be his ever afterwards. This undue hurry and this hankering for results have first to be detected and overpowered by suitable counter-ideas before the different paths can be seen in their true light. There is, after all, no short cut to progress in the sense that by some mysterious device one can suddenly transform oneself into a worshipful personality, skipping over the necessity that there would otherwise remain for painfully conquering one's weaknesses and replacing them by virtues. No path contains any mystery and nothing but hard and patient struggle will lead to solid achievement. The ancient books have

proclaimed this principle in unmistakable terms, and the independent seeker who attaches the proper value to it and makes it the foundation for daily practice, gets to that extent the benefit a regular disciple derives from the timely suggestions of his preceptor.

### **Danger of Self-labelling**

Granting that the outlook has been freed from the pernicious passion for hasty short cuts, there still remains the possibility of the seeker labelling himself into particular paths and getting stuck up within a self-imposed and narrow circle. How often we see very sincere people refusing to read devotional literature or the stories of saints for the simple reason that they have classified themselves in advance as meant for the path of discrimination, and that they do not therefore wish to get side-tracked by permitting themselves such an uncongenial experience! Some honestly, but without the least capacity for self-analysis, believe they are born for mystic heights, and then, quite logically to their minds, endeavour to back out from all situations involving healthy activities, common courtesy or a moderate dose of general reading and discussion of ordinary human levels, making thereby their own lives dry and barren, and the lives of others uneasy, and sometimes positively painful. If only they could realise that the various paths differ merely in the proportion in which they mix the indispensable items of spiritual practice, and that no path contains a useless item from

which, by way of competition, another path would generously grant them exemption, they would pause before they attach labels to themselves in this manner. But such a synthetic outlook comes much later in spiritual life, as the net result of a fair amount of hard practice; and can never be thought of as a first acquisition following the comparative study of a few books, and guaranteeing from that time the accuracy of one's self-diagnosis and prescriptions. Till such accuracy is made a permanent asset, the independent seeker is not beyond the range of storms that the traditional method can help him to quell.

### **Benefit of Satsangam**

Despotic monarchy has no doubt had its day and can never be revived. Those who believe that the contact of the religious teacher has been only a despotism, although beneficent, in the spiritual line, have therefore every right and reason to invent democratic devices in keeping with the spirit of the times. But those who may be inclined to regard the preceptor as a sort of twentieth century Dictator, whose guidance can be accepted on the ground that he derives his power only by the common consent, may freely burn such historical incense before him, and will surely progress to the extent that they listen respectfully to the suggestions he may give from time to time. If the objection of the modern mind is merely to submit to one-man-rule, it can yet find the traditional



method agreeable. For by its emphasis on Satsangam or Sadhusangam, tradition has always democratically invited the aspirant into the *company of holy men*, pressed him to become a member of the

*group* himself and utilise his time in some *common* "drill," comparison of notes and general discussions on the one hand, and separate *individual* practice on the other.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

[Sarada Devi, known as the Holy Mother among the devotees of the Order, was the source of inspiration to many an earnest seeker after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna. In the Udbodhan Office, where she mostly resided, she led a quiet and unobtrusive life, ministering to the spiritual needs of the men and women who looked up to her for guidance. The reminiscences which we shall bring out in our columns were written in Bengali by some of her devoted disciples. The translation is done by Swami Nikhilananda, now engaged in preaching work in New York. The publication is taken up to satisfy the eager desire of many to know more about Mother's life and work.]

WE had plenty of flowers at our Ballygunj home. The Holy Mother was always pleased with flowers. One day I gathered a large quantity of them and came to see her. I found her just ready for the worship. I arranged the flowers and she sat on the carpet before the image. I forgot to keep aside some flowers for worshipping the feet of the Holy Mother. So I was sorry to think that it would not be possible for me, that day, to worship her. But I soon found out that she had anticipated my secret desire. She herself had separated some flowers on the tray. After the worship was over, she said to me, "Now, my dear child, I have kept those flowers in the tray for you. Bring them here." Just then a devotee came to see the Mother with a large quantity of fruits. She was very pleased to see him. She put a mark of sandal

paste on his forehead and caressed him by touching the chin. I had never seen her show her love to any male devotee in such a manner. Next she asked me to hand him a few flowers. He accepted them. I found his whole body trembling with devotion. With great joy he offered those flowers at her feet and then went away after accepting the Prasadam.\* She sat on the cot and invited me very tenderly to come to her. I worshipped her feet. She, with great love, placed her hand on my head and kissed me. I was deeply touched by her blessings.

After a while I found her on the roof drying her hair. She invited me to come near her and said, "Take off the cloth from your head and dry your hair, otherwise it may affect your health." Golap-Ma

\* Prasadam : food offered to God.

came to the roof and requested the Mother to make an offering of the food to the images in the Shrine-room. The Mother came down from the roof. I also followed her after a while and found her in the Shrine-room. Like a bashful young bride, she was saying to Sri Ramakrishna in a soft voice, "Come now; your meal is ready." Then she came to the image of Gopala and said, "Oh, my Gopala, come for your meal." I was just behind her. Suddenly she looked at me and said with a smile, "I am inviting them all for their noon-day meal." With these words, the Holy Mother entered the room where the food was offered. Her earnestness and devotion made me feel that, as it were, the images obeyed her words and followed her to the offering room. I was rooted to the spot with wonder.

After the offering was over we all sat together for our meal. Then the Mother asked me to rest for a while. A man came a little later with a basket of fruits which were meant for offering. He asked the monks what he should do with the basket. They told him to throw it out in the lane. The Mother left her bed and went to the porch. She looked at the lane and said to me, "Look here. They have asked him to throw away such a nice basket! It does not matter for them in the least. They are all monks and totally unattached. But we cannot allow such waste. We could utilise the basket even for keeping the peelings of the vegetables." She asked

some one to fetch the basket and wash it. The basket was kept for some future use. I had my lesson from this incident. But we are so slow to learn.

After some time a beggar came to the house and shouted for some alms. The monks felt annoyed and said rudely, "Go away now! Don't disturb us." At these words the Holy Mother said, "Have you heard their remarks? They have driven away the poor man. They could not shake off their idleness and give something to the beggar. He only wanted a handful of rice. And they could not take the trouble of doing this bit of work. Is it proper to deprive a man of what is his due? Even to the cow we owe these peelings of the vegetables. We should hold these near her mouth."

I went to see the Holy Mother again after many days. She had gone back to her country home, and returned to Calcutta in the autumn of 1320 B. S., a few days before the Durga Puja. I visited her one afternoon and found a woman lying near her feet and begging with tears for initiation. The Mother was seated on her bedstead. She refused to comply with her prayer and said, "I already told you that I would not be able to initiate you now. I am not well." The woman was insistent. The Mother felt annoyed and said, "You treat initiation very lightly. You are perfectly satisfied if you get the Sacred Mantram. But you never think of the consequence." But the woman was inexorable. All present felt disgusted. The Holy

Mother at last asked her to come another day. Then the woman requested her to ask one of the monks to fulfil her desire.

*Mother* : They may not listen to me.

*Woman* : What do you mean, Mother? They must obey you.

*Mother* : In this respect they may refuse to comply with my request.

Finding the woman unrelenting, the Mother said, "Well, I shall ask Swami S. He will initiate you." But the woman started insisting again and said, "I shall be happy to be initiated by you. You can certainly fulfil my desire if you so like." She brought out ten rupees and said, "Here is the money. You may purchase the necessary articles for initiation." We all felt mortified at her impudence. This time the Mother was angry and said severely, "What? Do you mean to tempt me by money? You cannot coax me with these coins. Take them back." The Holy Mother immediately left the room.

Being hard pressed by the woman, the Holy Mother at last agreed to initiate her on the sacred Mahash-tami day. She soon took leave of us. The Mother now found some leisure to talk to me. She said, "Come here, my darling. I could not even exchange a word with you. How are you all?" It was almost evening. The women devotees came to see the Mother with suitable presents, clothes, sweets, etc. She was talking with them in a happy mood. It was a warm day.

I was fanning her. A woman devotee begged me to give her the fan. All of us felt exceedingly happy and blessed if we could be of the most trifling service to her. How has she bound us to her with an irrevocable tie of love and compassion! Her very sweet presence made her abode at Baghbazar the place of peaceful retirement for all of us afflicted with the sorrows of the world. I was about to take leave of her. As I prostrated before her, she said tenderly, "Come soon, another day. Write to me when you go away from Calcutta. Where is the piece of cloth you have brought for me? Give it to me, I shall wear it."

I came to see her after two and a half months. She cried, "Oh! It is almost an age since I have seen you!" In the course of the talk I asked her about the woman whom she had consented to initiate.

*Mother* : She could not come here on the appointed day. I had said to her, "I am now ill. Let me be well and then I shall initiate you." My words came to be true. She could not come on the Mahash-tami day as she herself fell ill. She came here many days later and was initiated.

*Devotee* : That is true. The words that are once uttered by you cannot but be fulfilled. We suffer as we go counter to your wishes. You also, many a time, condescend to initiate us even while you are ill and thus suffer all the more by transferring our sufferings to yourself.

*Mother* : Yes, my dear child. Sri Ramakrishna also used to say that. Otherwise why should this body suffer at all? The other day I was ill with an attack of diarrhoea.

My sister-in-law was with me. The Mother said referring to her,

"A very nice and quiet girl. There is only one dish of vegetable. If this be not palatable, then the whole dinner is spoiled." The meaning of these words was that I had only one sister-in-law in the family. My life could have been made unhappy if she had not been nice.

## ANANDA-BRAHMA-VADA—I

(OF THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD)

*By Akshaya Kumar Banerjea, M.A.*

### The Quest of the Absolute

THE Taittiriya Upanishad is generally accepted as one of the earliest Upanishads. It consists of three discourses. The first gives the truth-seeker a systematic course of instruction on the method of disciplining the body and the mind and preparing the self for the culture of higher knowledge. The second teaches him to rise to higher and higher planes of experience and makes him acquainted step by step with the inner and inner—truer and truer—characters of the self, leading him to the conclusion that perfectly blissful consciousness constitutes the innermost essential character of the self, and that the outer selves, as experienced in the lower and lower planes, are the grosser and grosser embodiments and partial self-manifestations of this true self. The third discourse, given in the form of a dialogue between the Rishi Varuna and his truth-seeking son Bhrigu, clearly points out that, with the ascent by means of

proper self-discipline to higher and higher planes of experience, there is a revelation of the more and more essential aspects of the nature of the Absolute Reality, and in the highest plane there is the realisation of the ultimate truth that *Ananda* (Absolute Bliss) constitutes the true, perfect noumenal character of the Absolute Reality.

In the Upanishad period the Absolute Reality was indicated by the term 'Brahman,' and it is in this sense that the term has been used in later Indian Philosophy. The term 'Brahman' etymologically means *the Greatest, the Supreme*. Hence it came naturally to denote that Supreme Reality which has no kind of limitation, which is self-existent, perfect and infinite, than which nothing greater or higher or more real can be conceived to exist, and beyond which there is nothing to be known. Accordingly, if Brahman is known in its true character, the highest truth is known and the ultimate demand of knowledge is

perfectly satisfied. The most advanced thinkers of the Upanishadic age arrived at the conclusion that the knowledge of the true character of Brahman was not only the ultimate goal of human knowledge, but it was the perfect fulfilment of the highest ideal of the entire human nature. They realised that Brahman is not only the absolute ground of all that exists, but that it is the true self of all selves. They discovered that the human self, freed from all limitations and characteristics falsely ascribed to it, is identical with Brahman in its true essential character. By knowing Brahman, man attains the perfect nature of his self.

This idea that the perfect self-fulfilment of man consists in the true knowledge of Brahman was prevalent among the learned members of the higher grades of the Upanishadic society, though there were exponents of *Karmakanda*, who opposed this view of the ideal of human life. The idea was most prevalent among those who were averse to worldly concerns, and loved contemplative life. Men in general with various grades of moral, intellectual and spiritual development, though believing that the knowledge of the true character of Brahman was the highest goal of life, were however led to adopt particular courses of activity or particular forms of religious practices or particular types of discipline and culture, for the satisfaction of particular demands of nature, for the achievement of particular purposes of actual life, for the realisation of the transitory

and imperfect ideals valued in the society. But the best among them, actuated by the noblest aspiration for getting rid of all possible sources of pain and misery, transcending all limitations and imperfections, realising the highest ideal of human life, and satisfying once for all the innermost demands of nature, proceeded to the systematic investigation into the essential character of Brahman, the Absolute Reality, under the direction of preceptors who had already attained the highest truth and were competent to teach it.

### The Method of the Quest

It has to be understood that the process of investigation, in this case,—the method of the quest of the Absolute—is of a fundamentally different nature from the processes generally adopted for the discovery and proof of the truths of the sensible phenomenal world. The human reason, in every plane of its knowledge, has some fundamental assumptions or postulates, which are unquestionably accepted as the foundations and standards of truth in the particular plane. In the physical plane our reason takes for granted that our sense-organs, in their normal conditions, give it an exact representation of the phenomenal objects of the world existing independently of the knowing subject. The principles of identity, contradiction, causation, etc., as understood in this plane, are also regarded as inviolable ultimate conditions of truth. Accordingly we proceed to the investigation of

truths of this plane by methodical sense-perception and application of those principles. We do not care to turn inward and examine how far our own outlook, the characters and limitations of our sense-organs, the principles assumed, and the mode of reasoning adopted become the *constituent* factors of the nature of the objects as known by us. In this way, in every plane the knowing subject, with its characteristic limitations, finite powers of observation and special modes of looking upon objects and reasoning about them, imposes itself upon the objects and modifies their nature; but it accepts this modified nature of the objects as their true essential character. In truth, the objects as they really are in themselves remain unknown to the subject. The knowledge attained and accepted as true in these lower planes is necessarily relative. It is not the knowledge of the objects as they are in themselves, but that of the objects as appearing to and reconstructed by the subject. The character of the objects of knowledge, therefore, changes with the change of character and outlook of the subject in the different planes of its development. The methods and instruments of knowledge themselves stand as insurmountable barriers between the truth-seeking subject and the true nature of the objective Reality.

In order to attain knowledge of the Absolute Reality, the subject has to rise above these planes of relativity and ascend to the plane of

absolute knowledge. This plane is, in one sense, the plane of absolute passivity of the subject, in which the subject should put no obstacle, by its own positive character, particular predispositions and narrowness of outlook, to the perfect self-revelation of the Absolute Reality, so that the Reality may make the subject completely its own and reflect itself in its true character upon it. In another sense, this may be regarded as the plane of absolute activity of the subject, in which the subject has to free itself absolutely from all desires and inclinations, prejudices and predispositions, assumptions and postulates, narrowness of outlook and limitations of power, which may possibly exercise any truth-distorting influence upon it and make its knowledge relative. The subject has to attain a state in which it will shine undisturbed in its perfect truth-realising character.

For this purpose the method which is of utmost importance is *Tapasya*,—a process of systematic self-discipline,—discipline of the physical organism, the mental powers and tendencies, the faculty of reason, and all the aspects of nature with which the truth-seeking subject finds itself related and which exercise beneficial or hostile influence upon its mission of discovering the true character of the Absolute Reality. By suitable *Tapasya*, the subject has to transcend the limitations of its outlook and remove from within its actual nature the obstacles in the path of the true vision of the Absolute, approach nearer and

nearer to the Absolute by extricating itself from the inherent impurities and imperfections of the lower planes, and ultimately stand face to face with the Absolute and become united with it.

### **Varuna's Instruction to Bhrigu**

In the Taittiriya Upanishad, Bhrigu is said to have approached his father Varuna with an inquiry into the true character of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. It is obvious that there were divergent views about the character of Brahman prevalent among the wise men of the time. Varuna, as a true teacher, instead of trying to satisfy the curiosity of the boy with a dogmatic assertion or philosophical dissertation, explained to him merely the connotation of the term Brahman and instructed him to devote himself to the quest of the Absolute by the appropriate method of self-discipline. He taught him to make his soul—the truth-seeking subject—worthy of receiving the truth by freeing itself from impurities, imperfections, distorted outlook and divided attention, and he assured him that the Absolute Reality would reveal its true character according to his worth.

The sage explained that Brahman or the Supreme Reality must be that ultimate substance from which all these beings derived their existence, by which their existence was sustained, towards which they were moving and in which they would again be completely merged in the end. Brahman was thus conceived

to be Something, which was the origin, the substance, the support, the regulator and the final goal of all phenomenal existences. The essential nature of this Something was the subject matter of inquiry.

The necessity for such an inquiry is not felt, until and unless the knowing subject is convinced that the phenomenal beings, whether animate or inanimate, are not self-existent, that their transitory, conditional and derivative existence implies as their ground some Absolute Reality with eternal, unconditional and necessary existence, and that the uniformity, adjustment and harmony experienced among their movements, changes and courses of development imply a unity of the regulating principle. This conception of the phenomenal nature of all actual and possible objects of experience, the consciousness of their inexplicability in terms of their own apparent characteristics, the yearning for transcending them and being in touch with the supreme ground of their existence, presuppose a high degree of intellectual development and comprehensiveness of outlook. But to be convinced that some Supreme Reality must exist by itself as the ultimate ground of the universe does not mean acquaintance with the essential character of this Reality and direct touch with it. The knowing subject must undergo higher and higher courses of moral, intellectual and spiritual discipline and thereby rise to higher and higher planes of outlook and experience, in

order to approach nearer and nearer knowledge of this Ultimate Truth to the supreme ground of all existences, to attain truer and truer and finally to be united with it in the deepest spiritual experience.

*(To be continued)*

## FUNDAMENTALS OF BUDDHISM

*By A. C. Banerjee*

**B**UDDHISM is not a religion, because it serves not as a vehicle of faith and worship to reach the kingdom of God, the very existence of which has been denied by it, nor a philosophy as its aim is not to speculate on the origin of the universe—a no-problem according to Buddhism. But it is a thorough rational investigation of the most vital and basic principles of life, a study of life in its real state, its causes, its flow and its consequences, and a practical solution to the most vital-seeming problems of life.

Buddha, the expounder of Buddhism, was born about 621 B. C. in a district of the Great Indo-Gangetic plain—the land that had been the birth-place in the ages of sages and saints, of philosophies and religions—and met with many religious beliefs and various shades of philosophy then prevailing in the country. But none of them could satisfy his highly rational intellect and keen realistic vision. He left the grandeur of his royal parents' palace at the blooming age of thirty and set out to know the great truth of life himself.

Man is a creature of his environment. His mind and body are tied

in the firm grip of circumstances. His thoughts, his deeds and actions are guided by his surroundings.

Great are those who have broken off the shackles of their environment and freed their mind to view facts from a detached plane—the only plane for the realisation of truth—and frustrated all conventions and superstitions that befog and deceive the common mind. They are the revolutionaries and pioneers of human thought that pave the stepping stones to the advancement of mankind. It is the clarity and dynamic force of their thought that strengthen the vitality of human culture.

Buddha was a revolutionary of that order. He broke off all conventions and superstitions of his time. He shattered caste and viewed all men from one humanitarian point of view. He declared that all men are subject to the same law (the law of cause and effect) and that there are grades of mental and physical efficiency amongst them, but no hereditary caste or creed. He denied the existence of God or any such Super-being holding the reins of human destiny. He said every individual is his own



maker and his own guide. He viewed the facts of life directly by his own keen penetrating intellect and he invited his disciples to witness them themselves. He said, "Don't accept anything because I have told you, but test it by your own judgment and if it proves to be true, follow it."

Buddha was asked if the universe is finite or infinite in space and time, if life and body are the same or different, if the enlightened one exists after death or not, and so on; but he answered not, not because they transcended Buddha's knowledge but because they were irrelevant questions having no bearing on the vital problems of life, and caused by the false manner of envisaging things.

Buddha defined his doctrine in the four great noble truths—suffering, arising of suffering, cessation of suffering and the way leading to the eradication of suffering. This is the whole text of Buddhism.

What is suffering? Buddhism records: Life is suffering; death, illness, old age, association with the undesired, dissociation from the desired, in short all the five elements of life (form, feeling, perception, volition and knowledge) are suffering. It is plain truth. It is the grim problem of every individual life, whose greatest tragedy is that it has sought for happiness but met with pain, sorrow and disappointment.

But suffering is not a permanent thing. It arises and it grows. What is the cause of its rising? Buddhism

explains: Craving. Craving for life! There is danger, because life is impermanent and its change is liable to bring suffering. Craving for wealth, honour, love! Upon all hangs the same suicidal danger—the impermanence, the changeability of nature. And all cravings lead to suffering, even the craving for heaven or for a higher plane of life after death follows the same track of law.

That which is subject to the law of causation is subject to the law of cessation according to the very nature of the law. Suffering is caused, it comes out of craving and consequently it is eradicable in nature. How is it eradicated?

Buddhism declares: No craving, no suffering. Even the most common life can realise by experience that the object itself,—the object of our perception,—does not bear the germ of suffering. Nor is the subject himself such an infection of misery as to inoculate the poison to whatever he comes in contact with. Suffering does not lie in the contact between our senses and the object of our perception but on the measure of interest that our mind attaches to it. That is why Buddha declared: "In all, the primal element is mind; pre-eminent is mind; by mind is all made. If man speaks or acts evil of mind, suffering follows him close as the wheel the hoof of the beast that draws the cart. Again, on the other hand, if a man speaks or acts uprightness of mind, happiness follows him close like his never-departing shadow."

Mind is the prime mover of life. No amount of external rites or rituals, worship or ceremonies, asceticism or mysticism, which are nothing but external manifestation of egoistic craving, can lead a person to the state of perpetual bliss,—the goal of life,—if his own thoughts are misconceived and his mind clings to cravings. It is only the clarity and rightness of thought that can root the cravings out.

But how to achieve that? By following the noble eightfold path—right understanding, right mindedness, right speech, right action, right living, right endeavour, right recollectedness, and right concentration. These are, again, classed into three gradual groups of morality (Sila), Concentration (Samadhi), and Wisdom (Panna). The first

purifies the behaviour, both mental and physical, breaks the shackles of convention and superstition and directs the mind toward right vision. The second penetrates directly into the heart of the objects of our perception and analyses them in their exact nature. And the third reveals the truth that all things are impermanent and that the craving for them leads to suffering. Here the enlightened one kills his cravings, and by his own sharp and penetrating intellect he realises that all his bondage of material as well as super-material objects are shattered. The causes for life and death are destroyed once for all, and he enters the state of perfect pacification of the mind and final enlightenment—the State of Nibbana.

## LATER INDIAN METAPHYSICS: SAIVA SIDDHANTA

*By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.*

THE Saiva Siddhanta is one of the choicest products of the South Indian intellect, and deserves to be placed alongside the great systems of thought given to the world by Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhwa. The great works which form the inspiration of the Saiva Siddhanta system are the sweet and sublime Thevaram, songs of Saints Sambandhar, Appar, Sundarar, and the wonderfully mellifluous and passionate poems of St. Manicka Vachakar in his Tiruvachakam. These poems

are as remarkable as the Tiruvaimozhi songs and hymns and poems of the Alwars. Tirumular's Tirumanthiram is another great gospel of this school of thought. The great work of Sekkilar, called Periya Puranam, which contains the lives of the sixty three Saiva Saints (Nayanars) contains the best elements of the Saiva Siddhanta system of philosophy. But the first clear and comprehensive formulation of the system is in Meykandar's Sivajnanabodham (13th century A. D.), which is an exposition of

twelve verses in Raurava Agama. His disciple, Arulnandi Sivacharya, expanded the teachings of his master in the great work called Sivajnanasiddhiyar. Umapathi Sivacharya's Sivaprakasam and Tiruarutpayan are other famous works.

It is noteworthy that the cult of Siva is as old as the Satarudriyam and the Swetaswatara Upanishad. Nay, the Yajurveda says : एकमेव रुद्रो न द्वितीयो तस्ये (Siva is the Supreme Deity; He has no peer). In the Upanishads we read about उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् (Companioned by Uma, the Great God, the Lord of all, the three-eyed, the dark-throated, and perfectly tranquil). I have no patience with those theorists who fancy a God Rudra who is different from God Siva. Every God has his gentle (Saumya) aspect and his terrible (Ghora) aspect. Vishnu the Protector has as many destructions to his credit as Siva the Destroyer. The stern aspect of Siva is called Rudra. Some people who wish to show off their prodigious learning say that Rudra is an Aryan and Vedic deity while Siva is a non-Aryan and Dravidian deity, and that the two concepts mingled and coalesced later on. We do not know at whose invitation they were present as such commingling coalescence. Nor can we follow the theories of those who discern in the Agamas a later rival to the Vedas. The great minds of India's past found no divergence or discrepancy as between the Vedas and the

Agamas. The great Saint Sekkilar says : ' May the Vedic faith flourish and may the Saiva cult shine.' Saint Thayumanavar says : ' The Vedas and the Agamas are both of them true, both being the word of the Lord. Know that the first is a general exposition and the latter is a detailed exposition. Both are the word of God. Where difference is perceived between them on examination, the great will perceive that there is no such difference at all.'

Earlier than them, the great Nilakanta Sivacharya, called also Srikanta, who wrote a Bhashya on the Vedanta Sutras from the Saiva point of view, wrote : वयं तु वेदशिवागमयोर्भेदं न पश्यामः, वेदोऽपि शिवागमः (I do not perceive any difference between the Veda and the Sivagama. The Veda itself is the Sivagama). A well-known Tamil stanza says : 'The Veda is the cow; the Agama is its milk, and the Tamil songs—Thevaram and Tiruvachakam—of the four Saints is the ghee within it.'

The very quintessence of absurdity is reached when we find asserted that the name Siva is a Tamil word meaning 'red' (Chivappu) and that the word is not found at all in the Vedas. The word is found in innumerable places in the Vedas (स ब्रह्म स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमः शिवराट्). Nay, the holy Panchakshari, नमः शिवाय, is the very heart point of Rudram. Further, in the Lalita Sahasranama, Iswari is described as the Goddess, the dust on Whose feet is worn on the head of Sruti and as being the pearl in-

side the mother-of-pearl of the Agamas. In a beautiful verse Sri Sankaracharya describes the Goddess as being the parrot in the cage of the Omkara and the Kokila (cuckoo) singing in the garden of the Upanishads and as the peacock dancing in the forest of the Agamas. Thus, to fancy any divergence of doctrine between Vedas and Agamas and any non-identity among Vedic and Agamic, or North Indian and South Indian or Aryan and Dravidian docties, may be plausible and applauded scholarship, but does not contain an iota of truth at all.

I do not propose to expound in detail the twelve verses of Raurava Agama which form the basis on which the grand fabric of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy has been raised. I would, however, give a running exposition of the stanzas to show the evolution of thought therein. The first verse<sup>1</sup> shows that the manifold world, with all its variations of name, form and sex, has emanated from Siva. His Shakti creates the world out of Maya. The creation is by His Will. It consists of Tanu (body), Karana (senses), Bhuvana (worlds) and Bhoga (pleasures and pains). The Saiva Siddhanta teaches that Matter (Maya) is the material cause of the universe, that Siva is the efficient cause and that His Chit Shakti is the instrumental cause (Sahakāri Kāraṇa). It has been well said that the seed is Maya, the sprout is

Karma, the tree is the world, the earth is God and its moisture and heat are the Shakti of God. The dissolution of the universe is to give souls rest after Karma. The creation of the universe is to enable souls to take the fruits of Karmas (actions) and to lead them to get rid of their Ānava Mala (subtle impurity or ignorance). God Siva is not affected in any way by the unceasing changes and transformations of the universe. In the same sun's presence one lotus is in bud, another is in bloom, another is fading, and yet another is dead. The sum of the three Malas (Maya, Ānava and Karma) is expressed by one word, Pāsa. This Pāsa causes bondage to the Jiva or Atma, who is called Pasu. Ānava Pāsa binds the soul by limiting his omniscience and is called Pratibandham. Karma Pāsa binds the soul in the bonds of desire, action and enjoyment, and is called Anubandham. Maya Pāsa limits the omnipresence of the soul and confines it to the body and is called Sambandham. The entire aim of the soul's existence is to get rid of Pāsa and attain God.

The second verse<sup>2</sup> tells us how God is one with the souls and yet different from them and gives them embodiments in accordance with their Karma. According to Saiva Siddhanta, its doctrine of Advaitam does not mean that there is only one existence. Advaitam does not mean Ekam. The souls are depend-

1. स्त्रीपुत्रपुंसक्रादित्वाजगतः कार्यदर्शनात् ।

अस्ति कर्ता सहेतुतत् स्रजत्यस्मात्प्रभुर्हः ॥

2. अयस्मान् व्याप्तिर्योऽनन्यः कर्ता कर्मानुसारतः ।  
करोति संसृतिं पुंसां आज्ञया समवेतया ॥

ent upon God. His grace (Arul Shakti) pervades the entire realm of Being. Thus the doctrine of the Saiva Siddhanta is the doctrine of Bhedābheda (unity in difference). The three Malas, *i. e.*, Maya, Karma and Ānava are Anādi, without a beginning. The souls pass from the subtle to the gross body and *vice versa*. The endless rounds of births and deaths is called Samsara. God pervades everything and yet is above everything. Thus His immanence and transcendence are asserted equally well in the Siddhanta. Its aim is to substitute for our relation of unity in variety in regard to the world, the relation of unity in variety in regard to God. The first verse in the immortal Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar gives a beautiful illustration. Just as the sound 'A' is the first and pervades every other sound and yet is different from all other sounds, so God is supreme and is immanent and transcendent, one with everything and yet separate from everything. Just as life is one with the living body and yet is different from it, even so God is one with everything and yet is different from everything. Thus the Siddhanta affirms difference of being and identity of substance.

The third stanza describes the nature of the soul. The soul is different from Maya and from God. It speaks of 'my body,' 'my senses,' and 'my mind' and realises its self-identity in the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. The Saiva Siddhanta says that God is Sat,

that Maya is Asat and that the soul is Sadasat. God is like the sun and the soul is like the eye. Maya is like the eye-glasses which give a temporary relief to defective eyesight. It is only the physician's lancet that can cure the malady. Even so only the grace of God can cure the soul's subtle primordial ignorance. The soul is really separate from its gross, subtle and causal sheaths or bodies.

The fourth stanza shows the inter-relations of the soul and the mind. It is in this respect that Indian philosophy is far superior to western philosophy, which almost always confuses the mind and soul. In respect of the mind, the Siddhanta, like the Vedanta, refers to its four aspects, Chittam, Manas, Ahamkaram and Buddhi (perceptive, cognitive, egoistic and determinative aspects). The Siddhanta affirms five Avasthas or states of the soul: the Jagrat or waking state when the soul is functioning in the forehead and has thirty-five active organs including the ten external senses; the Swapna or the dreaming state when the soul functions in the region of the neck and has twenty-five organs excluding the ten external ones; the Sushupti or state of deep sleep when the soul functions in the heart and has three organs including the Chittam; the Turiya when the soul functions in the region of the navel and has only two organs; and the Turiyatita when the soul functions in the Muladhara (sacral plexus) and is Purusha having none of these

organs at all. The fourth stanza compares the ego or the soul to the king and the four aspects of the mind to the ministers. Chitta, Manas and Ahamkara prepare the statistics of the sense-impressions, and Buddhi is the prime minister who settles the conclusions and reports the same to the soul.

The fifth stanza shows how each human sense or faculty can see what is lower than itself but cannot perceive itself or what is higher than itself. The senses can perceive the objects but not themselves or the mind. The mind can perceive the senses but not itself or the soul. Even so, the soul can perceive the mind and the senses but cannot perceive itself or God. The soul is vivified by the Arul Shakti or grace of God, just as iron is moved by the magnet which itself remains unchanging or unchangeable. In beatitude the soul is one with God, yet separate from God, just as in daytime the light of the stars is included in the light of the sun and becomes indistinguishable from it but is yet separate from it.

The sixth verse deals with the nature of God. He is Satchidanandam. The Saiva Siddhanta does not admit divine incarnation and differs in this respect from Vaishnavism. We can realise God only when our Pasujnanam is transformed by the light divine (Pathi-jnanam). God Siva, by His powers of Ichcha and Kriya, evolves the universe and, by His power of Jnana or Arul, leads the soul unto Himself. Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra,

Iswara and Sadasiva are the presiding deities of A, U, M, Bindu and Nadam in the Pranava.

The seventh stanza teaches that God (Sat) does not know bondage (Pāsa), that matter (Asat) does not know God and that the souls live in matter and in God and are hence called Sadasat.

The eighth stanza teaches that God appears as Guru to the evolving, aspiring soul and leads it unto God-realisation. It is by means of Tapas that the soul will free itself from the bondage of the senses and the mind. Tapas consists of Sariya, Kriya and Yoga. The first two include all ethical and ritualistic acts. They and Yoga lead to Jnana, which includes Bhakti. They bring about the balancing of virtue and sin, the seeing of the Guru and attainment of divine grace. The interconnection of Sariya and the other steps is described by the terms Dāsa-marga, Sat-putra-marga, Sakhā-marga and San-marga. Saint Thayumanavar brings out this interconnection by the simile of bud and blossom and unripe fruit and ripe fruit.

The ninth stanza says that we can realise God, not through our mind or our senses but by means of Jnana. Only then shall we be liberated from our bondage. It is by the contemplation of the holy Mantra of Panchakshara that Jnana will dawn on our souls. For, then only can we conquer our Vāsana Mala.

The tenth verse says that by attaining oneness with God, the

soul will lose its Mala, Maya and Karma. He who becomes a Jivan-mukta through Jnana will live in his body which is the result of his Prarabdha Karma, but he will not have any other birth as all his other Karmas have been burnt up by Jnana.

The eleventh verse describes union with God. His grace will remove the impurity of the soul and attract the soul to itself as a magnet attracts iron. The soul is then full of the bliss of the Lord.

The twelfth verse teaches that the liberated person, in his Jivan-mukta state, should worship Sivajnanis and Siva Linga as Siva Himself.

The concept of God in Saiva Siddhanta is sublime. It affirms God's omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. It says that God is infinite, unlimited, absolute, immutable and perfect and that He is also just and merciful. It affirms clearly His self-existence, immaculate purity, wisdom and infinite bliss. It speaks of nine forms of God : Sivam, Shakti, Nadam, Bindu, Sadasivam, Maheswara, Rudra, Brahma and Vishnu. It is said that the Siva Linga is the primordial Sadasiva or Pranava form of God, combining in it the subtle forms of Nadam and Bindu, the former being represented by a line and the latter by an arc. The phallic theory about the Linga is a crude and false absurdity. In many Lingas the face of Siva is found sculptured. Vinayaka, Subrah-

manya, Bhairava and Virabhadra are other forms of Siva.

According to the Saiva Siddhanta, the statement that God is Nirguna means only that He is Gunatita, transcending the three Gunas of Prakriti, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and hence is Aprakrita or non-material. It thus harmonises God's personality and His transcendence of the Gunas. Just as we see the sun by his rays, even so we can see God only by the light of His grace. This is one of the special features of this school. Another special feature is its affirmation, besides the twenty-four categories, which are derived from Maya or Prakriti, of twelve more—seven Vidya Tattvas and five Siva Tattvas. The power and grace of God are to be specially found in divine form (Murti), abode (Sthalam), waters (Tirtham), priest (Guru), holy image (Lingam), devotees (Jangama), ashes (Vibhuti) and beads (Rudraksham).

The ethical code is lofty and noble. It harmonises ethics and ceremonialism ; it combines purity of body with purity of speech and mind ; and gives scope for the harnessing and utilisation of the inevitable inequalities of life in the direction of equality and unity. Its sublime emphasis on Ahimsa and its stern prohibition of the killing of animals have led to the word Saivam being interpreted as meaning vegetarianism.

The battle of the faiths begins in India, as elsewhere, as soon as the attempt is made at the overlordship

of one cult over others. The Vaishnava bigots declare Siva to be a Jiva, though they grudgingly, and probably with unuttered and unutterable mental reservations, concede that He is a perfect soul (Jivanmukta). The Saiva bigots accord the same honour, sauced by damnation with faint praise, to Vishnu. They say that in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna, by reason of his So'ham Bhavana or realisation of God Siva as being one with himself, showed the universal form to Arjuna. They hold that Arjuna found on the person of Siva the flowers he had showered on Krishna, that Arjuna

was really doing worship of Siva all his life and that Krishna had received Siva Diksha (initiation) from sage Upamanyu. This is sheer bigotry. The Vishnu form is as Paramatmic as the Siva form. If Siva can have many forms which are incompatible with one another, if He can be the Linga, Ardha Nariswara and Chandra Sekhara at one and the same time, why can He not have the Vishnu form as well? Why should we be constantly discussing spiritual heraldry and settling the rank of divine precedence by interminable arguments seasoned by abuse?

## REVERENCE THAT SAVED

*S. N. Suta*

**P**URANIC figures are all grand. We may not agree with all they thought or did. For they had a code of manners of their own, and a sense of values, too, widely different from our own. Yet in many points they excelled owing to the broad and reverential attitude cultivated during the days of their training, and kept up with ease to their life's end.

Take, for example, the story of Utanka in the Mahabharata. He had finished his studies and shown, in a trying situation, that he could withstand temptations. His teacher, therefore, blessed him and allowed him to go home. But Utanka wanted to do him some signal service before leaving. It was then agreed that he should bring the two ear-

rings belonging to Paushya's Queen. The teacher's wife wished to wear them on a particular day.

Of the subsequent incidents, let us single out a few. Paushya bade Utanka approach the Queen in her own apartment and demand the jewels. Utanka went, but returned unable to see her. The King thought for a while and remarked that his wife being very chaste, no one who had been defiled or had taken impure food would be able to see her. Utanka, *with great modesty*, reflected in his turn and remembered that, in his hurry, he had defiled himself by making ablutions after his meal in a standing posture. He therefore corrected himself now; and as a result was able to see the Queen, who gave him the ear-rings.



"These," said she, by way of warning, "are very much sought after by Takshaka, King of the serpents. Hence carry them with great care." Confident of his strength, a little proudly perhaps, Utanka made answer, "Lady, be under no apprehension. Takshaka is not able to overcome me."

Paushya now wished to worship Utanka as his Atithi (guest). Utanka agreed, but finding that the food served was cold and unclean, containing hair in it, and remembering too well the incident of defilement just over, boiled up and cursed the King with blindness. Paushya replied by cursing that Utanka would be childless. Hospitality thus quickly developed into hostility! A moment later, however, the King verified the state of the food and asked for pardon and freedom from blindness. "What I say," said Utanka, "must come to pass. Having become blind, thou mayst, however, recover thy sight before long." Proud and impetuous, it is true; but what sense of strength coupled with *readiness to forgive and comfort*! Paushya too was strong and clear-headed, but what a woeful incapacity for cooling down! Said he, "I am unable to revoke *my* curse. A Brahmana's heart is soft like new-churned butter even though his words bear a sharp-edged razor. A Kshatriya's words, on the other hand, are soft like butter, but his heart is a sharp-edged tool. I am unable to neutralise my curse. Then go thou thy ways." Not at all daunted, and conscious of

his purity, Utanka replied, "The food being truly unclean, thy curse cannot affect me. Of this *I am sure*."

Curses are no doubt bad, supposing one is capable of giving them; but capacity to cool down and forget and comfort is certainly worth acquiring as a permanent mental equipment.

On the way a naked beggar approached Utanka, sometimes appearing, sometimes disappearing. Not minding it much, Utanka kept the ear-rings on the ground and stooped for water. The beggar then snatched the jewels and fled. *Completing his ablutions* this time (कृतोदकक्रायः गुच्छिः), Utanka *reverently bowed to the gods and spiritual masters* (प्रयतो नमो देवेभ्यो गुरुभ्यश्च कृत्वा) chased the thief and seized him. But Takshaka—for it was no other—escaped through a hole in the earth, and the hole immediately closed! Undaunted as usual, Utanka took up a stick and began to dig but could not make much progress. Indra beheld his distress and rewarded his reverence by sending the thunderbolt to his assistance. The hole then widened and Utanka got into the world of the serpents.

*In his habitual reverent mood*, Utanka then sang the glory of the serpents. He praised Airavata and their elders and their great prowess and beauty. Even Takshaka, the wrong-doer, was *adored and requested* to return the ornaments. But apparently to no purpose.

He then looked about in a thoughtful mood, and happened to

see a man with a handsome horse. Again the habit of reverence stood him in good stead. To the rider he addressed a series of holy Mantras, chanting towards the close, "Thou wielder of the thunder, thou who ownest for thy carrier the horse received from the depths of the ocean and which is but another form of Agni, I bow to thee, thou Lord of three worlds, O Purandara!" Highly gratified, Indra—for the rider was he, though Utanka knew it not till his teacher told him later—asked him what good he desired. Straight and bold came the reply, "Even let the serpents be brought under my control." The man rejoined, "Blow into this horse." Though the advice could be viewed as silly, Utanka's reverent eye could see only the divine hand in it; and he blew. In a second, fire and

smoke filled the snake-world and Takshaka, surprised beyond measure and anxious for the welfare of his subjects, hastily came out and said, "Pray, Sir, take back the earrings."

Utanka now remembered that that was the day on which the teacher's wife was to wear the jewels. How was he to cover the distance? The man with the horse then addressing him said, "Ride this horse, Utanka, and he will in a moment carry thee to thy master's abode." Thoroughly convinced of the divine play around him, Utanka mounted the animal's back, and reached his destination in time.

This was the strong and reverent man whom the gods, as the story shows, chose to be the instrument for starting Janamejaya on a fiery campaign against the snakes.

## A SPIRITUAL ARISTOCRACY

By A. S.

DR. Justin E. Abbott is already known for his English rendering from ancient Mahratta sources of the lives of some well known poet-saints of Maharashtra. His latest work entitled *Stories of Indian Saints*\* forms volumes IX and X of the series "The Poet-Saints of Maharashtra" planned by him, the former covering the first thirty chapters of Mahipathi's

*Bhaktavijaya* and narrating the lives of Jayadev, Tulsidas, Nama-dev, Kabir, Dhyana-dev and some others.

Dr. Abbott was born in 1853 at Rahuri in the Ahmednagar District of the Bombay Presidency, which has been the scene of the greater part of his life's activities. He passed away at Summit, New Jersey, U. S. A. on the 19th June 1932, and this English translation of one of the greatest Mahratti classics is published under the provisions of his last will and testament. From

\* *Stories of Indian Saints*: English translation of Mahipathi's *Bhaktavijaya*, Vol. 1 by the late Justin E. Abbott and Narhar R. Godbole, 1933. Price Rs. 3.

the interesting Foreword of the Editor, Mr. J. F. Edwards of the United Theological College of Western India, we get an idea of the high place in Mahratti literature held by Mahipathi, one of whose masterpieces is the *Bhaktavijaya*. The late Mr. L. J. Sedjwick, I. C. S., one of Mahipathi's students, wrote thus of Mahipathi in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay (1910, Vol. XXIII, No. 65, pages 109, 110): "Viewed from any standpoint of criticism, the *Ovi* poems of Mahipathi and *Abhangs* of Namadev, Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas must be placed among the finest of the poetic productions of the world." Another of Mahipathi's students, the Hon. C. A. Kincaid, I. C. S., joint-author with Rai Bahadur D. B. Parasius, of a three-volume History of the Mahratta People (pp. 3-4) and author of "Tales of the Saints of Pandarpur" (pp. 3-4), says: "Had Mahipathi used a linguistic medium more widely known than Mahratti, he would have ranked high among the world's poets." Dr. Abbott himself, the learned translator, had a masterly knowledge of Mahratti and we have it on the authority of Pandit Godbole that often Dr. Abbott's English translation had enabled him to elucidate the meaning of the Mahratti text.

India from the remotest past has been the cradle of poet-saints, god-men so to say, who realised God through Bhakti (devotion),—Suka and Valmiki, and in later times Tulsidas, Tyagaraja the singer-

saint, Kabir, Tukaram, Jayadev, Nammalwar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and many others. The Bhakti school of thought in India has always represented God as very near to his Bhaktas (devotees), ready at any moment to rush to their rescue when they were in trouble. This thought appears as early as the Bhagavata and is represented by several Maharashtra saints, men and women of literary ability, wise in philosophy and godly in character. South India can also point with pride to many poet-saints of both sexes among the Nayanars and Alwars. The Bhakta's conception of spiritual communion and kinship with God, His nearness and protection, is well portrayed by Dhyaneswara, the first of the Mahratta poet-saints (about 1290 A. D.) in his commentary on the Bhagavata Purana. He says: "When the hour of their death comes, let them remember Me. The very moment they remember Me, that very moment I am present at their side. Their devotion puts Me heavily in their debt. With this feeling of indebtedness to them, when My Bhaktas lay aside their bodies in death, I serve them from a sense of gratitude."

The average Westerners' misconception of idolatry and polytheism has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding. According to them, Vishnu, Krishna, Ramachandra are so many separate independent gods; and stone images which represent them in temples are but little remote from the feti-

shism of savage peoples. And yet India's best thinkers, her deep philosophic minds and her noblest saints have been enthusiastic idolators without a suspicion in their minds that such worship is either mental weakness or moral degeneracy. Hindu polytheism is God Supreme manifesting Himself in many forms in accordance with the needs of the times or of particular worshippers. Rightly considered, Hindu theology must be understood as monotheistic, as Christianity or Islamism. This fundamental idea must be clearly recognised; for otherwise misconception of Hindu religious thought, as represented in the Stotras and songs of the saints, is inevitable. One should have regard to the substance of the prayer and not to the form of the prayer or the deity invoked. If this attitude of mind can be correctly interpreted as spiritual, India may be said to have realised the Oneness of God through variety of forms, as taught by her seers and saints. In this view Hinduism may be said to be based on the strictest monotheism.

३३४५

In the Stotras, songs and prayers, of which we have an abundance in the Bhakti literature of India, there must be many things that will appear strange to those who have a different philosophy. So in assessing the value of Bhakti literature, which has swayed masses of Indian humanity for ages past, and which still has a powerful hold on them, attention should be concentrated, not so much on the form in which

the prayers appear, but rather on the substance, the kernel, of the prayers, the heart's sincere desire expressed through loving devotion. To the average Hindu, and even to those who have risen to high philosophic heights, worship of God through a visible representation has been a way of natural approach to the Supreme. Indeed it has been considered by many Indian thinkers as the only way, although the Manasa Puja or the direct mental worship has always been given a higher place. The stone or metal image of some supposed manifestation of an Avatar, in its setting in a temple sacred to that manifestation, has always been, and is to this day, an inspiration to reaching God; and it cannot be denied that spiritual satisfaction has been found by such worship through an idol. It is a pity that students of comparative religion, devoting their attention entirely to philosophy and ritual, have neglected the devotional literature of India, which is a unique characteristic of India's religious life and thought.

Let me conclude this rapid survey by reiterating the points of view which I wish to present. The Bhakta should not be regarded as occupying the lowest rung of the ladder in spiritual attainments. The Bhakta is also a Jnani, let there be no mistake about it. And so, to understand the theology of the Bhakti school, one should not begin with idolatrous worship and work backwards, but should begin with that philosophy which for centuries

has dominated Hindu thought. As stated above, its basis is an absolute monotheism. This universe, everything included, consists of One Substance. For the sake of convenience, it may be called Brahman, or otherwise named, but no human words can fully describe it. For nothing is known of it. On this monistic basis Hindu theology revolves. God, a Personal Being, omniscient, omnipotent and good, is a form in which the One Substance exists. There is

but One God. But God manifesting also in various forms as the universe presented to our senses, it is assumed that He can be described, and He has been described by philosophers and poets and teachers. All the manifestations described, then, are thus only of that One Substance.

We commend these observations to students of comparative religion for a fresh, sympathetic study of the religious life and thought of India.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

If the illustration of the seed and the sprout is brought forward, then also the thing to be proved and the illustration are on the same level. When the illustration and the thing to be proved are alike, the former cannot be used to prove the latter. (20)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

(The opponent says) "In the relation of cause and effect which has been maintained by us, as between an antecedent and its consequent, you have raised verbal difficulties (quibbles) and tried to show that our argument tends to be as absurd as the birth of a father from the son and that there is as much relation between the two, as between the two horns of an animal. But we have never maintained the production of an effect from a cause not already existent or of the cause from effects not already established." (The Siddhantin asks) "What then do you mean?" (The

opponent says) "The relation between the cause and the effect is similar to the relation that obtains between a seed and a sprout." (The Siddhantin then proceeds) "So you appear to hold that the illustration of seed and sprout and the thing you wish to prove, are alike. But we ask, if the relation of cause and effect in the seed and sprout is really beginningless; and say no; for all the antecedents must have had a beginning as their consequents have. As we actually see, in the seed and sprout, there is no beginninglessness, in both cause and effect, as we find that all the previous ones had a beginning and all the succeeding ones likewise. At any moment, a sprout arises from a seed and the sprout later on gives rise to seeds. The succession of seeds and sprouts shows always a beginning and nothing can be said to be without a beginning. This also applies to cause and effect. If you maintain that the series of seeds and sprouts is without a beginning, we say

no ; for apart from individual seeds and sprouts, there can be no such independent thing as a series of seeds and sprouts without a beginning. Similarly a series of causes and effects cannot be maintained as apart from individual antecedent (causes) and subsequent (effects). Hence we have well explained how the succession of causes and effects has no beginning and we have not made use of any verbal quibbles in maintaining our point. Also, even learned Logicians, do not make use of an illustration which itself requires a proof for its establishment, to prove a point which is like it in all respects. Here the word "Hetu" is used to mean "illustration."

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The absence of the knowledge of antecedence and consequence, brings prominently into light, the doctrine of non-birth. For to those that see the qualities of a thing born, how can the antecedent (cause) be beyond understanding? (21)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

If you ask how (the doctrine of) non-birth is brought into prominence by the learned (disputants), we reply as follows. We mean that the mere absence of knowledge of the antecedence and consequence, as regards cause and effect, is itself enough to bring to light (the doctrine of) non-birth. If the properties of a thing born, are perceived (as they are), how can its preceding cause not be grasped? The perceiver of a thing born, must needs perceive that from which it is born: for the thing born and that from which it is born, must be in a closely intimate relation with each other. Therefore (the doctrine of) non-birth must come to light.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Not a thing is born either from itself or from another. (Also) nothing

is born either as being (sat) or as non-being (asat) or as being and non-being (sadasat). (22)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Anything that is said to be born, is not (really) born either of itself or of another or of the two combined. Nor can being, non-being or a union of the two be born. The birth of anything cannot be established by any manner of means. Nothing can be born from its own form (not sufficient in itself). Nothing can reproduce itself, as one jar does not form another jar. Nor is anything produced from something else, as a cloth is not produced from a jar. In the same way, two different things cannot together produce a new thing, as it is opposed to experience. A jar and a cloth together do not give rise to a (new) jar or cloth (or to a third thing).

(An opponent may say) Well ; a jar is produced from clay and a son from the parents. (We reply). True ; that a thing is and is born, are the ideas and words of the ignorant. But those ideas and words are further analysed by the wise, to determine what is true and what is false. When properly examined, the basis of the ideas and words and the corresponding attributes of objects such as jar and son, are found to be nothing more than words. This is supported by the Sruti " All effects are mere words and names."

If effects (like jar and son) are supposed to be pre-existing in clay, parents, etc. birth need not be predicated of them as they are already existing. Effects cannot be said to be born from non-being (asat), as like the horns of a hare, they have no existence whatever. No effects can be produced from being and non-being (sadasat) as such a combination is contradictory (and destructive) in its very nature. Therefore,

it is settled that no object whatever is ever born (or produced).

Again, those who maintain that an object is produced by the union of action, actor and the result, and that it is of a transitory nature, are far removed from us who rely on reason and experience. For, as the objects produced disappear immediately after their production and before their cognition (and determination), they cannot at all be experienced and thus memory is rendered impossible.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

A cause is not born from that which has no beginning. An effect also (is not born) of its own nature. When (a thing) is known to have no beginning, it will also be known as having no birth. (23)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Moreover, when you admit the beginninglessness of cause and effect, you must necessarily admit that both cause and effect can have no birth. How so ? From an effect which has no beginning, no cause is produced ; for you do not admit that from an effect having no beginning, a cause could arise : nor do you say that an effect can arise of itself, without an external cause or from a cause having no beginning and no birth. Therefore, in admitting the beginninglessness of cause and effect, you tacitly accept their non-production (and non-birth). Worldly experience also supports the view that where the cause is not known in the beginning, its birth also cannot be known, as said above. Only that which has a cause, has a beginning, and not that which has none.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

For cognition, there must be (an external) cause, as otherwise both (that is, cognition and cause) are destroyed (that is, become non-

existent). Also on account of the causation of sorrow, the existence of external objects must be accepted (this is the view of an opponent). (24)

*Sankara's Commentary*

To strengthen the view already described, a possible view which an opponent may take is brought forward. Cognition consists of apprehension of sounds, &c. which are produced by causal agents. We recognise that they have a cause, an object (causing them), apart from the cognising subject. The cognition of sounds, &c. cannot take place in the absence of objects (causing them). Therefore, there are causes (producing cognition). If there were no objects, sounds, touch and colours like blue, yellow and red, &c. such varieties of cognition cease to have any existence. As we are aware of them, there is no cessation of such variety of cognition and of the objects causing them. Therefore, as there are both cognition and objects of cognition, we are of opinion that apart altogether from the cognising subject, there must exist external objects, as maintained by thinkers (other than Advaitins).

The various colours, blue, yellow, &c., depending on external objects, cannot be attributed to the inherent powers of consciousness, capable of bringing about the variety of cognition. The clear crystal cannot show blue or other colours, unless flowers, &c. having the colours are placed beside it. Hence, it follows that apart from the cognising subject, there are real external objects, as maintained by other schools of thought.

Moreover, pain exists, being caused by burns, from fire, &c. If fire, &c., causing burns, did not exist apart from the cognising consciousness, they would be causing no pain from burns, &c. But

they do (cause pain). Therefore, we know that external objects do exist. Pain cannot be said to be due only to cognition, merely because it is not seen elsewhere.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

From the point of reason, cognition may be admitted to require a cause. But from the point of view of Reality, a cause may be said to be causeless. (25)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The view expounded in the previous verse is now refuted. (The opponent is told) What you say is true. According to you, reason may require a cause for cognition and for the production of pain. You may stick to your opinion, that reason requires the existence of external objects (to account for cognition). But if you ask what we have to say to it, we reply as follows: Jars, &c. which, to you, form the basic objects for cognition, are considered by us as having no cause, as having nothing to rest upon and as not forming a cause for their cognition. We proceed to tell you why. Because we consider them from the point of view of the nature of things, that is, Reality. The jars do

not exist apart from (different from) their basic clay. (Jars do not exist independent of clay) just as a horse exists different from a buffalo. Similarly, a piece of cloth does not exist independent of the threads and these again from their constituent parts. By carrying the analysis deeper, till we come to the very essence of things, and language fails, we do not arrive at anything which may be said to be the cause of anything. Or we may interpret "the nature of things" to mean "unreality of appearances" and conclude that the so-called external objects are as much causes (of cognition) as a rope is a cause for the appearance of the snake. As the appearance of objects is due to illusion, even a cause may not be a cause because it disappears when the illusion goes. In the case of persons in dreamless sleep or in Samadhi, or of persons who have become liberated (Muktas), there is no illusion and consequently, there are no external objects independent of Atman. What appears as an object to an insane person, need not present the same appearance to a sane one. The appearance of duality and of pain are similarly refuted.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Tribute to Dayananda**

Prof. Kalidas Nag began his instructive Convocation Address at the Gurukula University, Hardwar, by paying a glowing tribute to the life-work of Swami Dayananda. The Swami, said he, was born (1824) "when his brother-spirit, Rammohun Roy, was fighting single-handed, with rare courage and conviction, to defend the Vedic philosophy and religion against the uncritical and unjust attacks of ill-

informed foreigners." After undergoing a "discipline of phenomenal severity," Dayananda took leave of his venerable Guru, Virajananda (1863), who outlined to him the noble work he was to take up. "The Vedas," said he, have long ceased to be taught in Bharatavarsha, go and teach them; teach the Shastras, and dispel, by their light, the darkness which the false creeds have given birth to."



The Swami's visits to Bengal and Bombay between 1872 and 1875 and "his masterly advocacy of a 'Back to the Vedas' and of a radical religious and social reform created a new enthusiasm all over the country." In Bengal he found a ready welcome at the hands of Devendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen. "That was the epoch when the nation was waking from the nightmare of self-humiliation" caused by the "hypnotism of foreign propaganda" degrading our religion and our culture. All provinces saw the birth of scholars who took to Vedic studies and brought out the results of their researches in book form. This pursuit of Vedic knowledge with a new zeal was carried on "thanks to the apostolic mission of Swami Dayananda who, true to the parting message of his Guru, waged a relentless war against narrow and dogmatic distortions of the original Aryan life through later Sanskrit literature." His *Satyarth Prakas* in Hindi—the language he chose for the benefit of the masses in his discourses—was completed in 1874 and was followed by his *Veda Bhashya* and other works. "We are dazzled," says Prof. Kalidas Nag, summing up, "when we think how he attended to so many other things, the teaching of Sanskrit, writing of grammatical treatise, organising schools and social service centres, culminating in the foundation of the Arya Samaj in 1877, one of the chief arches of our national reconstruction. Opinions will differ, as they must, with regard to the details of his critical and creative activities. But there was no doubt in the heart of our nation, when that great son of Mother India passed away in 1883, that a Dynamic Soul had come after ages to bless the rising gene-

ration into a new life of reform based on justice and of creative sacrifice for the benefit of India and the world." Dayananda thus "flung our stagnating soul back on the elemental currents of Progressive Life. That is how he saved our nation from a slavish imitation of the Occident, and purged our society from the age-long inequities of caste, and injustices to our women and depressed classes."

Of course this was not told in the sense that *all* inequities and injustices are clean removed from *all* quarters, and that present and future generations have nothing further to do in that direction.

The speaker next passed on to the educational institutions started under Dayananda's inspiration, describing the Anglo-Vedic College and the Gurukula as "modest laboratories of national education" which "came to open our eyes and to help the fulfilment of our wants", "where Education departments and our Universities were failing us."

### Legacy of Aryanism

His "young friends of the Gurukul," said the Professor, introducing the subject of his Address, had already been told by the lecturers of previous years, of the priceless "legacy of Aryanism." This year, therefore, he was going to confine himself exclusively to a "historical appraisal of this ancestral legacy," hoping that his suggestions would kindle in the soul of a few *Snatakas* of the Arya Goshti, "the enthusiasm to explore and discover, collect and collate, explain and interpret the baffling richness of materials of Aryan history and culture". He did not mean to say that no research institution at all had been started for the purpose. For there were the Oriental Col-

lege at Lahore and the Bhandarkar Institute at Poona, while Benares and Bengal had respectively their Saraswati Bhavan and Shantiniketan. The University of Calcutta, too, had been doing substantial service by its special provision for a proper study of India's Ancient History and Culture. But these had proved utterly insufficient for the colossal task. Success, in the Professor's opinion, is possible only "if all the Universities of India co-operate with one another, if they collaborate with the Universities and research centres of Japan and China, Siam and Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and ever so many new zones of linguistic, archaeological and historical studies in the Orient." They have also to keep in touch with the great Oriental seminars of Europe and America, especially those of France, Germany and Holland. Then alone could they hope some day to "reconstruct our forgotten national history and re-write the grand Encyclopaedia of Aryan Culture."

Enough, however, had already been done to expose the gross mistakes of those who, through racial and sectarian narrowness, had tried to prove that Aryan culture was a static one, confined at best only to limited geographical areas. Time was when "with mordant though stupid irony" a Macaulay could summarily dispose of our culture by describing it as "absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics and absurd theology." "With a cocksureness that is the special privilege of God's innocents," Macaulay asserted that the sums spent on the Arabic and Sanskrit Colleges was "not merely a dead loss to the cause of truth but a bounty money paid to raise up champions of Error"! This was in 1835. What a contrast, showed the lecturer,

when Professor Louis Renou of the University of Paris, "with a rare devotion and French clarity" could bring out, in 1931, before a hundred years were scarcely over, "a most welcome and exhaustive *Bibliographie Vedique*" containing in about 350 closely printed pages, "an invaluable guide to all important articles, notes, monographs and volumes written on the Vedic and post-Vedic literature! Even in 1757, Anquetil du Perron, an "intrepid French youth of twenty," "had traversed the Indian Ocean with the determination to discover for Europe the Vedas of the Aryans and the Avesta of the Iranians." Even when past seventy, Perron kept patiently recording his personal reminiscences about "the theological and philosophical doctrines of the four sacred books of India: 'Rak Beid, Djedjr Beid, Sam Beid, Athrbhan Beid.'" "That was no doubt a landmark," says Prof. Nag in the cultural collaboration between the East and the West."

### Spread of Aryan Culture

Referring to the century and a half of research that has followed the efforts of Perron, the lecturer finally dwelt at length upon "the triumphal march of Aryan culture from the land of Saptasindhu to the Gangetic valley" and elsewhere. He spoke of the "clash and conflict between the two opposite forces of Vedic progressivism and the post-Vedic conservatism inducing the formation and hardening of exclusive groups and castes, which in their turn threw the progressivists into the opposite camp of heterodox reforms of Jainism and Buddhism." He pointed out the striking coincidence between the exhortations (Satyāṇna pramaditavyam etc.) in the Sikshadhyaṃya of Taittiriyaopanishad and the Apramada-

varga of the Dharmapada, which is supposed to contain the direct counsel of Lord Buddha. Buddha took "legitimate pride in his Aryan ancestry, although, propelled by the fundamental laws of Aryanism, he renounced the later Vedic aberrations and castes and proclaimed the first great dynamical religion of universal Fraternity (Maitri,) translated into the historic reality of Greater India by Emperor Dharmasoka" his loyal disciple. India was then again on the march, and "thousands of her sons and daughters, inspired by the divine frenzy of spiritual nomadism congenital to the Aryan, left their hearth and home," crossed "the Himalayas and the Oceans and all frontiers, physical as well as cultural, to carry the deathless treasures of Aryan self-realisation, orthodox as well as heterodox, to humanity at large, irrespective of caste and creed." Summing up with passionate eloquence, the Professor said, "This history of Greater India is one of the most inspiring chapters of human history showing how the terrific deserts of Central Asia were fertilised with the life-blood of these servants of Humanity who built up oases of culture and spirituality, which we are rediscovering from the sand-buried ruins of Khotan and Kucha,

Turfan and Tuen Huang." "Fifteen centuries of this cultural and spiritual co-operation between India and the Far East has yet to be reconstructed and incorporated into the general history of Dynamic Aryanism."

### There is Hope

The lecture ended with a refreshing note of prayer. Said the speaker: "If during the terrific struggles of Islamic and Christian invasions, the Aryan spirit lapsed for a few centuries into lethargy and fatalistic surrender to external facts, if in course of these dark ages, we developed psychological and social nightmares like 'he outrageous cult of untouchability, child-marriage and infanticide, this nation was never deprived of the divine guidance of seers like Ramananda and Kabir, Nanak and Chaitanya till we come to our own days when we are cheered by the prophetic voices of a Rammohun and a Dayananda. May their example and their blessings purge us of all sins and inequities, and may we again be permitted to assume our ancestral role of supplying the notes of Unity and Harmony to the spiritual orchestra of Humanity ever disturbed by discords of hatred and disunion!"

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE POPES AND THEIR CHURCH: By Joseph McCabe. Published by Watts & Co., 5 and 6, Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E. C. 4.**

The author calls this "A Candid Account," and really, throughout the book there is an appeal to authorities and a merciless directness of statement that must make the book dreadfully candid to those against whom it is

written. When chapter after chapter unrolls before us, we feel, behind the high lights and the shadows effectively arranged with consummate dramatic skill, the grim figure of the author himself looming large and showing, by his ominous gravity, his determination not to throw away even a bit of his vast resources and also his consciousness of the results he must be producing. "I am

so frequently described," says he in the Preface, "as a writer of portentous solemnity that I need not fear a charge of frivolity and flippancy. As Mr. G. K. Chesterton has explained (*Heretics*, ch. xvi), I am entirely incapable of frivolity or humour." Now, mark the comment that follows, as well as the ease with which Mr. McCabe not merely parries those thrusts but, what is more interesting, makes them strike the Catholic Church itself with their unspent force! "This has been to me," he innocently assures us, "a precious safeguard in wandering through so singular a world; while"—and the torch is pushed towards the explosives, as he continues—"the knowledge that I was once a priest and professor of the Church will keep the reader confident that I have not mistaken the religion of ancient Mexico or modern Thibet for that on which I profess to write."

The opening paragraph, which we quote in full, shows the subject matter of the whole book. "Of all the fictions," we read, "which still shelter from the storm of modern criticism under the leaky umbrella of 'Catholic Truth,' the legend of the divine foundation of the Papacy and the Papal system is quite the holdest and most romantic. No divine force, but a pitifully human series of forgeries and coercions, of pious frauds and truculent ambitions, perpetrated in an age of deep ignorance, built up the Papal power, hierarchy and creed." These statements Mr. McCabe then proceeds to substantiate with quotations from various authors and records, many of which are admittedly Catholic. In the chapter with the biting heading, "Europe Decays and Popes Thrive," we read, for example, that "In the *Liber Pontificalis* itself we have the explicit testimony of Pope Hadrian I, the greatest Pope of the time, that *Pope Stephen ordered the eyes of Christ-pher and Sergius to be cut out, and for the sordid reason that King Didier promised to restore the disputed lands if he did so.* Stephen, Hadrian says, admitted this to him." As a sample of the records cited, we find in the chapter, "Papacy in the Depths," a most ugly incident noted down in his Diary by Burchard (who "lived in the Vatican") as having taken place on

October 30, 1501, which happened to be the Vigil of All Saints Day. Pope Alexander did not attend Vespers that evening, which was itself bad enough, but later in the night he "and his daughter, Lucrezia, dined with Cesare (a Cardinal) and fifty prostitutes in Cesare's rooms in the Vatican. The women, after the banquet, danced unclothed..... And this incredible, yet indisputable, scene ends with the 'Vicar of Christ' and his daughter distributing prizes of silk garments to those of the servants of the Vatican who 'had had carnal intercourse with the courtesans the largest number of times'!"

We wish to show two other sample ingredients entering into the composition of this dreadful dynamite Mr. McCabe hurls at the Catholic Church. In the chapter, "Down the Slope" we read of how Pope Gregory, who "erupted anathemas" against Emperor Frederick, returned to Rome after his expulsion. Gregory, we are told, made peace with his opponents, and "celebrated his return by the new kind of Papal fireworks—the burning of a multitude of Roman heretics." Really, more "burning" epithets cannot be selected to depict the activities of the Inquisition. But the final stroke is yet to come, when Saints Francis and Dominic are led up and made to pose in an altered theatrical light. "Of Francis, to whose fraternity, in its degenerate and ridiculous modern form, I once belonged, I speak nothing but respect and sympathy. Under the illusion of asceticism, which the Popes fostered, he wore out his gentle soul, and he died of a broken heart because his fraternity quickly went the way of all monastic flesh. But Dominic! The Dominican friars would do well, in modern times, to change their name. The fanaticism of their founder was more dangerous to others than to himself. He specialised on hatred of heretics, and his white-robed sons grimly stoked the fires of the Inquisition until the black-robed sons of St. Ignatius came to dispute the honour."

The Second Part of the book deals with such subjects as Catholic Scholarship and the Teachings and Rituals of the Church, which latter are badly ridi-

culed, and the Losses of the Church, meaning thereby the fall in the number of its adherents at the present day. One may legitimately laugh at the follies and condemn the pretensions of an institution, of whose "secret" archives and their contents, vices and diplomacy one has had direct knowledge and experience. But does this also necessitate ridicule of the faith, superstitious it may be in a sense, of that section of humanity that happens to be, in spite of the extraordinary erudition and intellectual eminence of a few, imbibing at least the benefit of the kindergarten stage of rituals and worship? Crimes may, and ought to, be exposed, leaving it to those who are experts in sifting evidence to determine the accuracy of the charges and the conclusions. But as for faith, ridicule bestowed upon it seems to us to be a misdirection of literary effort. We would, therefore, like to go through a book, if Mr. McCabe will be pleased to give us one, which will deal in his characteristically candid, forcible and clearly-thought out manner, with the irreducible minimum of steps that one need take to attain a "spiritual outlook" or to develop one's personality to the extent that the rituals, etc., of the Catholic or of any other Church for the matter of that, do promise, falsely be it granted, to bring about in the sincere and faithful aspirant. Meanwhile, to all those who wish to know how institutions can easily take a downward curve in spite of their grand mottoes, and who wish to fashion wholesome devices to infuse greater power of resistance into weak human flesh, monastic as well as lay, we heartily recommend an intelligent study of this deadly missile prepared by Mr. McCabe.

THE GARDENING REVIEW: *Published by Rajam & Co., 17, Mukkar Nallamuthu St., G. T., Madras. Annual Subscription Rs. 3.*

This is a monthly devoted to agricultural and horticultural problems. It contains valuable articles, with practical suggestions. The get-up is excellent.

SANSKRIT-TAMIL DICTIONARY:—*Compiled by N. E. Venkatesa Sarma. Publication No. 4 of the Brahma Sayujya Library Series. Price Calico*

*Rs. 2-8-0. Copies can be had from (1) Manager, Sri Andal Fund Office, 109, China Bazar Road, Madras or (2) Mr. E. Doraiswami Iyengar, Kodambakam P. O., Chingleput.*

The Tamil world can in no wise adequately express its immense gratitude to the publishers for having brought out this fine edition of a well-compiled and neatly printed Sanskrit-Tamil Dictionary at a considerably reduced rate. This revised edition makes it possible for even a mere beginner in the study of Sanskrit to acquaint himself easily with the expressions which are most widely used in the famous scriptures such as the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Brahma Sutras, etc., and find out their respective equivalents in Tamil. We gladly recommend this Dictionary to Tamil students of all grades desirous of studying Sanskrit.

ADVANCE INDIA: *Edited by T. S. Ramanujam, M. A., LL. B. (Lond.). Annual Subscription Rs. 5.*

This is a newly started monthly with a variety of useful articles. India's political, economic and social problems rightly occupy a large proportion of its closely printed pages. Prohibition, Peace Conference, Fascism, Foreign Scholarships and the many other similar topics dealt with show the wide range which the magazine attempts to cover. The get-up is neat and beautiful.

YOGA: *Published under the auspices of the Yoga Institute of India by Shri Yogendra. Annual Subscription Rs. 2-4.*

The author's books on Breathing and Yoga are well known. This attractive little magazine deals with different aspects of the practice of Yoga. Some pages are set apart for women. In the closing pages are usually given interesting answers to questions, of which the following may be taken as a sample: "Can Basti be performed in sea water?"

LIFE OF SRIS CHANDRA BASU: *By Phanindranath Bose, M.A., Ph. D. Published by R. Chatterjee, 120-2, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. Price Rs. 2-8-0.*

Sris Chandra Basu was one of the reputed Bengalis of the last century who was connected with almost every important movement of his time in some form or other. He belonged to a family

of Bengali settlers in the Punjab. In this book a high place is accorded to his father Babu Shyama Charan Bose in the history of the progress of education in the Punjab, where he acted as the Head Clerk in the office of the Director of Public Instruction.

Babu Sris Chandra began his career as a lawyer and after a few years' practice was taken into Government Service. He was a man of extraordinary versatility. The work done by him to advance the cause of Sanskrit Literature by the numerous books written by him and published by the Panini Office deserves all praise.

The extra stresses the author has put on the injustices committed by the Government officers seem to us to take away from the grand effect aimed by him. The get-up of the book, too could have been considerably improved. We trust nevertheless that this biography will be read with interest by all.

**MUKUNDAMALA** : Edited with English translation by M. V. V. K. Rangachari, Ocanada.

The author calls this "an appeal to modern thought." Sanskrit characters are avoided for the benefit of "those of the larger public who might not have cared for any other script." We feel, however, that the printing of Sanskrit verses in English characters without any signs to indicate long or short vowels serves no useful purpose. Elaborate notes have been added. Here is a sample on Aham (I): ".....The cult of Vishnu or the Visishtadvaitic cult is claimed to be the golden mean between the arrogant usurpation of Godhead by man and the despondent abdication of all higher pursuit." The style, as this shows, is too verbose to make the book pleasant reading. To this extent one misses in this book the spontaneous outburst of devotion characteristic of the original work by Kula-sekhara.

**KNOW THYSELF** : By Swami Rajeswarananda, Sri Arya Ashrama, 44, Nagappier St., Triplicane, Madras.

This is a pocket-size book of neat get-up and simple style.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Adyananda in South Africa

Being invited by the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj, Swami Adyananda of R. K. Mission arrived in Johannesburg on 1st February 1934. Many prominent Indians and some Europeans were present at the railway stations at Pretoria and Johannesburg. In the evening about sixteen associations in Transvaal, including the Indian National Congress, extended a hearty welcome to the Swami. The Swami, in reply, spoke on "India's Message to the World." The first public lecture was delivered in the Selbourne Hall, Johannesburg, on the 13th February, when the Swami spoke to an audience of nearly a thousand people, many of whom were Europeans. After the discourse, the Swami answered the questions that were asked by some of those present. The local Vedanta Ser-

vice Society soon afterwards celebrated the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, and the Swami spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna the Prophet of Modern India". Out of the other engagements that followed may be mentioned the speeches at the Indo-European Council on "An Eastern View of Western Civilisation", at the Government Indian School on "The Ideals of Education in India," at the International Club on "India and Her Civilisation" and at the Pretoria Theosophical Lodge on "What is Yoga?" Invitations have been received from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Kimberley and many other important cities. Weekly lectures on "Hindu Philosophy and Religion" have been arranged at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for some time to come. The Swami is also holding classes on the Gita, thrice a week for the benefit of the Indians,



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman,"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI

JUNE, 1934

[No. 2]

## HINDU ETHICS

सर्वोपकारिणो वीरः सर्वदेयाश्च भारत ।  
कामक्रोधव्यपेता ये तानुपास्व च पृच्छ च ॥  
लाभालाभौ सुखदुःखे च तात  
प्रियाप्रियं मरणं जीवितञ्च ।  
समानि येषां स्थिरविक्रमाणां  
बुभुत्सतां सत्त्वपथस्थितानाम् ॥  
धर्मप्रियांस्तान् सुमहानुभावान्  
दान्तोऽप्रमत्तश्च समर्चयेयाः ।

The virtuous, O Bharata, are those who act for the welfare of all, who are possessed of great courage and who are ready to give their all, even their very lives, for the benefit of others. They are free from lust and wrath. Do thou, therefore, always wait upon them and seek instruction from them.

Gain and loss, weal and woe, the agreeable and the disagreeable, life and death, are equal in the eyes of those men of firm tread, engaged in the pursuit of (divine) knowledge and devoted to the path of tranquillity and righteousness.

Restraining thy senses and without yielding to heedlessness, worship those high-souled persons who bear such love for virtue.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLVIII, 25-28, 33-34)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

ONCE at Dakshineswar one of the devotees—an impertinent one, though very sincere at heart—began to raise various objections to what the Master was telling him. When he thus went on marshalling his counter arguments although the Master explained the subject under discussion thrice or four times, the Master said with a mild scolding, "How obstinate you are, my boy! You don't accept this even though I myself say so!" Now a tender chord of the young man's heart was touched. "Of course," he said, "when you say so I cannot but accept. My previous objections were only for argument's sake."

### *Arjuna's Devotion to his Guru*

At this the Master said with a smile of satisfaction on his lips, "Do you know what the devotion for the Guru is like? Whatever the Guru will say, the pupil must *realise* at once. It was Arjuna who had this kind of devotion. One day, Sri Krishna, while roaming about in a chariot along with Arjuna, looked up to the sky and said, 'Behold! What a nice flight of pigeons there!' Arjuna at once turned his eyes to that direction and exclaimed, 'Really, friend! Very beautiful pigeons, indeed!' But the very next moment Sri Krishna looked again and said, 'No, friend! They are not pigeons, it seems.' Arjuna, too, saw again and said, 'True,

they are not pigeons.' Now, try to understand the meaning of this. A devout worshipper of truth as Arjuna was, he did not possibly assent to whatever Sri Krishna said, simply for flattering him. But he had such an unflinching faith in Sri Krishna that he at once *perceived* actually whatever Sri Krishna said."

*Guru, as a Divine Aspect, is but One. Nevertheless the pupil must have uncavering faith in his own spiritual guide. The illustration of Hanuman with regard to this.*

If it is settled that the Guru, who is mentioned in the scriptures as capable of removing the darkness of ignorance, is a Divine Aspect, as shown above, then simultaneously with it this other truth also has to be accepted that there are not many Gurus but only One Guru. Although the bodies, the instruments through which the Divine Aspect manifests Itself, are different, yet your Guru and our Guru are not different entities altogether. As a Divine Aspect, they are but One. As an illustration of this fact, we can cite from the Mahabharata the story of Ekalavya who chose with great devotion the clay image of Drona for his teacher and learned the art of archery from it. Though this abstract concept of the Guru stands to reason, nevertheless a thorough understanding of it requires much time and practice;



and inspite of a thorough understanding, the pupil has no other go but to worship his Guru in the person through whom he is favoured with the Divine Grace. In order to illustrate this, the Master would cite the story of Hanuman, the glowing example of faith and devotion, as follows.

Once in the battle of Lanka, Sri Ramachandra and his brother Lakshmana were entangled in a noose of snakes by the great hero, Meghanāda. In order to escape from this they thought of Garuda, the eternal enemy of snakes. Garuda came in no time; and at the very sight of him the terror-stricken snakes ran away helter skelter in all directions. Sri Ramachandra too, being pleased with the devoted Garuda, assumed before him the form of Vishnu, his chosen Deity, whom he always worshipped, and thus he was made to understand that the same Vishnu was then incarnated as Rama. But Hanuman did not like Sri Ramachandra taking the form of Vishnu and anxiously waited for his reverting back to Rama form. Sri Ramachandra at once understood this dissatisfaction of Hanuman. He had no sooner dismissed Garuda and again assumed the form of Rama than he asked Hanuman, "Well my child, why didst thou have that sort of dissatisfaction by seeing my Vishnu form? Possessed of great wisdom, as thou art, it is not unknown to thee that Rama and Vishnu are but One." "True, my Lord," replied Hanuman with

deep modesty, "there is no difference whatever between Vishnu, the Lord of Lakshmi and Rama, the Lord of Janaki, inasmuch as the same Supreme Self has taken both the forms. But nevertheless my soul always hankers after Rama, the Lord of Janaki. He alone is my Be-all and End-all,—as I am blessed with God-realisation through this very form. As the Supreme Self, there is no difference between the Lord of Lakshmi and the Lord of Janaki. Nevertheless the Lotus-eyed Rama is my Be-all and End-all."

*Guru, the Divine Power, exists potentially in all souls.*

Thus the Guru is a Power of the Divine Mother; and in as much as this Power is inherent in all souls, either in manifested or in unmanifested form, the devoted aspirant ultimately attains to a state where this Power manifests through his own self and explains to him all the profound truths regarding matters spiritual. In order to remove doubts about spiritual problems, the aspirant has no necessity at this stage to approach a second person. The Lord teaches Arjuna in the Gita, "When thy intellect crosses beyond the taint of illusion, then shalt thou attain to indifference regarding things heard and things yet to be heard" (II, 52). When your mind will have no business any more with such things as are worth hearing or spoken of in the scriptures, you will go beyond them all and understand everything

by yourself. Such is the state that the aspirant then attains to.

*The Master's Teaching—'Ultimately the mind itself becomes the Guru.'*

It is with reference to this state that the Master would say, "Ultimately the mind itself becomes the Guru or acts as the Guru. A human Guru whispers the *mantram* (the secret formula to be repeated by the pupil) into the ear, while the Guru of the Universe utters the *mantram* (infuses spiritual energy) into the soul itself. But there is a world of difference between the mind in that exalted state and the mind in the ordinary level. In that sublimated form the mind becomes purged of all impurities and consists of pure *sattva* and thus serves as an instrument for the manifestation of the higher divine power, while the mind in the ordinary level is averse to God, remains absorbed in sense enjoyments and is always swayed by the passions of anger, lust, etc."

*The Guru is a Match-maker.*

The Master would say, again, "The Guru is a match-maker, as it were. So long as Sri Radha is not united with Sri Krishna, their common friend who serves as their match-maker, knows no rest. Similarly, the Guru has no rest until the aspirant is united with the Deity. Thus the great Guru leads the pupil by the hand to higher and higher spiritual realms, and lastly taking him before the Deity, says, 'Look here, my pupil,' and disappears immediately."

*The Guru finally merges into the Deity. The Guru, the Deity and the Devotee—the Three in One and the One in the Three.*

One day, a devoted pupil heard the Master speak in this strain, and being grieved at heart at the unavoidable separation from the Guru, said, "Where does the Guru go then, sir?" The Master replied, "The Guru merges in the Deity. The Guru, the Deity and the devotee—the Three are in One and the One in the Three."

## SELF-LABELLING IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

If a person classifies himself in advance as meant for a particular type of discipline, the path of devotion for example, is he doomed to failure from the start? Supposing he is wrong, as there is great reason for his being so in the earlier stages, how far will he stray before he is forced to stop, or is imperceptibly pushed into the right path?

What will be the nature of the stopping force and how long can it operate? Whence can correction proceed and how would the various paths look in his eyes when a few corrections have been made in his ideas regarding them? In the following sections we propose to discuss some of these questions very briefly.

### Necessary and Helpful

We shall begin by admitting that this kind of self-labelling is not at all wrong. Nay, it is almost indispensable. This can be found out by analysing the ideas governing any action of ours. We decide upon a particular course of action, an excursion for example, only when we have come to the conclusion that it is helpful to us in many ways, that we can recoup our physical and mental vigour thereby, and that financially or in other respects we are in a state of fitness for undertaking it. Were we too poor to meet the necessary extra expenses or too ailing in body to move about with ease, such fitness would be lacking and we would not attach the excursion-label to ourselves. Prior to every action, then, there must be our sense of our fitness for it in as great a measure as our sense of the benefit that will come out of it. And self-labelling is nothing but this preparatory mental process. It not only starts us on our spiritual struggles, but also gives us, in proportion to its deep-rootedness, a tenacity of purpose without which success is impossible. Spiritual life is not smooth any more than worldly life is; and he who avoids the latter for its troubles and resorts to the former, believing it to be an escape-mechanism giving out sprays of cool and blissful waters, will get his due disillusionment the moment conflicts begin within his mind. And for this inevitable and healthy, though painful, internal churning he usually has not to wait long. Here,

as elsewhere, success obeys the same law, namely, that resistance of any kind can be got over only by a persistent application of well directed energy in adequate amounts. Self-labelling is advantageous since it can act as a spur and goad the aspirant into activity along his chosen channel when adverse circumstances threaten to drive him back or whirl him out of it. The conviction that he is born for a certain kind of discipline and equipped by nature herself with the necessary qualifications for it, is bound to infuse fresh courage into him in moments of depression and, to that extent, prepare the ground for his eventual success.

### Meanings Naturally Veiled

What is the harm in self-labelling then? The harm lies not in the mental process as such, but in the meaning that the aspirant gives to the label. Here, however, another difficulty crops up. We may preach a theory that words have, or ought to have, definite senses; but actual experience shows that they are not all as definite as we often imagine them to be. For example, we are all familiar with the word "rose" as well as the kind of flower meant by it. Closing our eyes let us call up the figure of a rose. Normally we are forced to get a picture of a particular flower in a particular setting, for which latter the simple word "rose" contains no clue at all. The picture may consist of a bouquet in which the rose, big or small, occupies a place, erect or slanting;

or a garden from which it is being plucked for us; or a prayer hall at whose altar it has already been offered. No two of us are likely to get the same picture, though the word "rose", according to our theory or our dictionary, can have only a definite meaning and no other. Here it may be argued that the differences are due to the peculiar mental make-up of the people concerned, that each person merely adds on to the indisputably definite sense of the word "rose" the factors of size, position, locality or value, just to give some beauty and completeness to the picture. Granting this, to avoid quarrelling over words, we yet find that every "definite" sense is destined in this way to be veiled, adorned and exhibited in a suitable background according to the varying mental antecedents of the thinkers. If this is true in the case of the simple idea of a flower, how much more must be the veilings and the trappings, the high lights and the shadows contributed by the aspirant's mind in the case of words like devotion, purity, or discrimination, commonly used for purposes of self-labelling!

### **Note, Reason and Check**

And if it is thus in the very constitution of the mind to add to, and take away from, the definite meanings of its labels, in its own peculiar fashion, how is the aspirant to proceed at all? The difficulty must certainly be the greater in the earlier stages when introspection has either not been attempted seriously, or has not become powerful

enough to detect the hidden sources of distortion. We cannot expect a person first to acquire such power, and *then begin* mind control; for part of the intended control consists precisely in the acquisition of this very power. This leaves only one course open before him, without any alternative: he must attach the label which appeals to him most, devotion for example, assign to it what sense he can at his level of culture, and try sincerely to put into practice as many of the implications as come within the range of his limited and untrained vision. The danger in self-labelling is thus seen to lie neither in the act of labelling nor in the imperfect meaning with which the aspirant starts. It can lie, and does lie, only in his coming to believe that the original meaning with which he commences his practice is the correct meaning for all time, and in his becoming obsessed by it or enamoured of it, so that he bars the road to the entry of new meanings into his mind afterwards. By such barring he gets stuck up in his chosen channel instead of floating steadily forward with its current. He has, therefore, to know from the start, that the initial assignment of meanings must be left open to revision and alteration, and always remain in the proper mood to receive new meanings that his daily contacts with his environment may suggest to him. To avoid slipping into a vicious circle, let us accept at this stage that, other things remaining the same, the aspirant must expect greater and

greater clarification regarding his chosen path, as his practice becomes intense, *take note* of the suggestions that may from time to time throw fresh light on, or even challenge, his original code of values and behaviour, and *check* his experiences by means of tests with which he has become familiar. Whatever be the path chosen, these are indispensable; and self-labelling becomes a danger only without them.

### Leaving to Nature

Since each aspirant, then, has of necessity to begin work with the imperfect and often distorted notions that he has come to possess, through what steps can he achieve an expansion of his heart till "its knots are cut asunder and all doubts are destroyed?" Some believe that he must leave it to nature to accomplish all evolution, and that only harm can result from attempts to force the pace of progress through so-called spiritual practices. Who will care to mar the normal blossoming of a rose bud by pulling open its petals a day or two in advance and yet expect the beauty and the fragrance to remain unaffected? This reasoning is surely sound, if it can stand searching analysis and show that it is not the outcome of sheer laziness and an unwillingness to exert on any account. There is only one point to be noted regarding it, and that of course makes much difference. Nature in the case of the plant does not show whims or partiality or an offended mood, as human beings consider it a privilege

to do, but effects growth methodically, utilising to the full the benefit of its environment. Does every aspirant's mind react similarly to its surroundings, and without being influenced by prejudices, welcome the food and light available at every stage of its progress? If it does, then nothing *more* need be done. The problem before the raw beginner, however, is—as we have pointed out before—not how to regulate himself from that state of open-mindedness and freedom from prejudice, but how to reach such an advanced state itself.

### Allow Free Play

Some wish to extend the analogy of the plant and argue a step further. Plants, they say, do not care to take in *all* the elements that are found mixed up in their environments. Untutored by any one, they accept and reject in accordance with their peculiar inner necessities, and they never make mistakes. Similarly man also must have his freedom to grow unhindered by theories as to the various new factors which must be introduced into his daily life to ensure success. Just as it was admitted that, in the earlier stages of his practice at least, the aspirant can label himself, and assign meanings which appeal to him, why should we not admit also that he can, without any danger, continue his accustomed ways of responding to the men and things around him? If he has no inclination to hunt for a spiritual teacher or has a repugnance to get into any group of avowed spiritual enthusiasts with

their common "drills" and other exercises, why should not such inclinations be recognised as essential or inseparable qualities of his mental make-up, by retaining which alone the bud of spirituality can blossom in him? Loves and hatreds constitute the very basis of all actions; why should spiritual life be considered an exception, where success, it is to be assumed, depends upon the rooting out of these fundamental emotions? Let all emotions have free play. The environment combined with the natural inner drive to secure pleasure will invariably set up healthy reactions; and out of the resultant boiling and cooling of the mind, Time can be trusted to produce and bring up the cream of illumination. There is no necessity, therefore, for deliberately altering one's code of values or to remain scanning the horizon expecting to bask in the glory of the new meanings said to rise above it. Illumination, after all, is not the total arrived at by adding up the bits of meanings thrown up from the recesses of the mind, like the skulls thrown up by the grave-digger in *Hamlet*.

### **What Environment and What Drive?**

To this type of reasoning one might reply by telling that neither can illumination be considered as the terminal state of a life-period of drifting with the original loves and hatreds over which no systematic control is attempted. Environment and the inner drive are certainly enough to pave the way for

illumination provided they are made to include more than what the objector intends. If beautiful landscape, educational institutions, productive concerns, chances of money-making or of political conquest are factors of environment acting upon the inner drive, we have to concede the same place to factors like the presence and teachings of saints, hypotheses relating to the desirability and possibilities of mind control, the too obvious defects of a civilisation based upon greed and aggrandisement, and so forth, also. Truly speaking, to the man of average education the whole world, with its broad avenues and varied departments should constitute the environment. He has no doubt to commence his life-pilgrimage in earnest from a relatively narrow end of some avenue, laid out through some department or other; but progress here, as in other walks of life, requires that he should keep his eyes open, note the advantages that can be secured by entering richer departments, and alter his responses accordingly. The inner drive, which is nothing but another name for life-energy, should be directed not merely into a few channels which appeared smooth and capable of giving some satisfaction at some time, but into those channels, into those avenues and those departments which maturer reasoning shows, and actual experience proves, to be capable of rounding up the personality and tuning it to a divine key. The inner drive, then, ought to this extent be

a "reasoned" drive, regulated by a desire to know more and a readiness to expand the outlook by suitable practical steps. Everywhere, people wish to assert their individuality nowadays, and it would be a pity if in spiritual life alone they think it an honour to drift and to boil and to cool as environments dictate. And this, too, under the false notion that environments, strictly speaking, cannot include the precepts and example of sages and seers and the indispensable items of spiritual practice common to the various paths described by the scriptures!

### **Stimulation through Jealousy**

What is the harm if a person is prepared to put up with the dishonour, if there be any, consequent upon leaving it to the environment to push him along the path of progress? Is there no hope for him at any time, anywhere; and is he doomed to welter for ever in the gloomy regions transcended by the wise? It seems to us that the necessity for such weltering may not arise at all, though some of the mythologies of the world have balanced their eternally blissful heaven by an equally eternal and correspondingly painful hell awaiting the wilfully ignorant. For theoretical purposes it is quite easy to picture a person so incorrigible that he will rather allow every roaring breaker to dash with all its violence against his face than learn to avoid its fury by a prudent dive or make a shift to better environments by a careful skipping into the smoother waters

ahead. In practical life, however, such incorrigibility is found not to persist very long. Every aspirant, let us remember, has in him the normal man's equipment of the feelings of jealousy, of rivalry and of competition. For a time he may, as the result of some ill-conceived principle, refrain from voluntarily viewing his accustomed responses critically, and from making suitable adjustments in the light of the suggestions of people longer in the field. But before long, imperceptibly perhaps, but anyway helplessly, he would be *forced* to alter his methods and even his principles on the continued and inescapable sight of things which can excite these "lower" passions. The heroism with which the open-hearted and the discriminating face their ordeals in life; the patent accuracy of the strides they make as against the halting and awkward wobble characteristic of the drifters; the calmness, the sweetness, the fragrance, the triumph, the glory and the honour witnessed in the case of the former and their opposites in the latter—these and many more, taking place within the immediate surroundings, are bound some day or other to draw the attention of the most obstinately inert and cause in his mind such volcanic eruptions of jealousy that his passive philosophy will soon be deservedly buried too deep for recovery. Competitive spirit, when once aroused, quickly bursts the limits of all previous calculations, and by diverting the inner drive into unexpected avenues, creates a

need for new responses, and in due course effects a considerable healthy widening of the general outlook. The painful struggles which must accompany any such widening cannot be avoided in the least by any delaying tactics; they can only be postponed and precious time wasted meanwhile. Is it advisable for any one to stand aside, marking time and refusing to extend his normal powers of reasoning and discrimination to his spiritual life and activities, while the rest of humanity seems to ignore him and marches steadily onward? What a pity, too, if that waiting is destined to be rudely terminated by the waking up of jealousy and other "lower" passions, uniting to overwhelm him and *compel* him, as no human teacher would have ordinarily stooped to do, to accept those very methods when such acceptance would have lost all grace owing to the prolonged and shameful refusal!

### **Awakening through Shocks**

Correction of the aspirant's outlook can come through various other forces also. As opposed to the indirect effect of other people's success upon his competitive spirit, it can come through his own direct experience of discomfiture, failure and even disaster. Where there is a lack of voluntary effort, nature supplies the want by administering

"shocks" according to her own peculiar law; and the victim is obliged to think of ways and means to avert them in the future. It may be that shocks cannot be avoided at any stage of spiritual progress; indeed some of the greatest spiritual giants got a good many from their environments. And the truth may also be that the aspirant simply gets the capacity to order his inside in such a manner as not to be affected any shock, when it comes. He may merely learn to soar in such solemn heights that, even from the level of his lowest descent, the rude shocks and the thrilling delights of the ordinary man seem like simple puffs of hot or cold breeze, and cannot in any way frighten or tempt him into modifying the course of his thoughts and actions. Still, the acquisition of this capacity means an immense difference in outlook; and if the ordinary methods of following the suggestion of expert teachers or of comparison of notes with other aspirants will not be adopted, the work done by them with relative smoothness is sure to be forcibly started when a crash or two will have taken place. Pain, like jealousy, can remove inertia. And very aptly does the Gita put down the *आर्त*, the afflicted, as the first among those who worship the Lord and yearn for His Grace.



## THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE INNER SHRINE

By Sheo Narain Lal Shrivastava, M. A.

**L**EIBNITZ, who perhaps first familiarised the modern western world with the idea of monads, said that each monad mirrored the whole universe from its own individual standpoint. This was the perception of a grand truth. Every living being, the humblest creature that breathes, mirrors forth to itself in knowledge, the entire objective universe, as far as its capacities permit. To live is to know, to be conscious of a world. How is the living distinguished from the dead? In this that, while the former has knowledge or intelligence, the latter has not. Of the humblest amoeba that lives, it is the privilege to be the knower of a world.

But man alone, of all created beings, enjoys this privilege the most. The universe before man is spread out in knowledge, and is revealed the fuller, the deeper his knowledge grows about it. *In knowledge*, man holds "the whole choir of heaven and furniture of earth." Since the dawn of human civilisation, the highest and noblest aspiration of man, has been to get ever fuller knowledge. Civilisation, through all this progress of ages, has been marching towards one unseen goal—the attainment of Infinite Knowledge. The spirit of man ever struggles to out-soar the boundaries of the known, and peer into the mysterious unknown

beyond. Religion, which is the expression of the deepest urge within man, is at bottom, the same impulse.

Now, the march for the conquest of knowledge was made in two directions—characteristic broadly speaking of the East and the West; the one investigating the nature of the knower, the Atman, *for which* exist all knowledge and the objects known; the other pushing its enquiry outward into the world of objects known, in entire segregation from the knower, the Self. The western mind, down from the days of the Greeks, resorted to empirical generalisations in building the edifice of their knowledge; while the Orient, especially India, relied on introspective analysis as the one secure way of coming to ultimate truths. Of course, India made great strides in the empirical sciences also, but she did not cling to these as pathways to the highest Illumination. The knowledge that brought the fullest Illumination to man was the knowledge of the spirit, the Atman. The Hindu sages knew full well that one could not hope to be fully illumined by engaging himself in an endless pursuit of knowledge concerning objects, segregated or divorced from the subject, the knower. The knower is prior to, and exceeds all that is known or could ever be known; consequently

a knowledge of objects alone could not bring the fullness of wisdom. Hence, the inward search after the Self.

## II

Atma-vidya is the crowning glory of India, the highest achievement of her genius, and her most precious gift to the world. The Atman is the ruling conception in Indian thought and the central peg around which is hung the entire fabric of Vedantism and the spiritual culture of India with its characteristic inwardness. We shall now endeavour to lay bare the meaning of Atman in all its connotations and then pass on to consider the steps which lead to this Inner Shrine.

The world, the entire cosmos, as we said before, spreads out in knowledge, which is ever growing, ever developing. Whence is all this knowledge? It must have a source, a matrix. This ever-swelling fountain of knowledge must have a perennial source from which it proceeds. This source is the Atman, the eternal and ultimate knower of all knowledge, the subject of all, that is, the base and support of the entire knowable universe. The Atman knowing, the Atman witnessing, all things are as objects of its knowledge. The intelligible universe presupposes an ultimate and fontal intelligence which comprehends all and can itself be comprehended by nothing. This supreme intelligence was called by the ancient Hindu sages the Atman which knows all but is known by none: "स वेत्ति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता

तमाहुरग्रयम् पुरुषं महान्तम्". It is the light of all lights: "ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः". it shining, everything shines: "तमेव भान्तं अलुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभति".

This supreme intelligence is the principle back of all our intellection, cognition and knowledge. To it we ought to gain access if we want the highest Illumination.

To ascend to this summit of knowledge, this fontal source of intelligence, has been the dearest endeavour of the aspiring sages of India. The Hindu seekers of Truth never gave their assent to the view that the ultimate nature of Reality is comprehensible by reason. They must intuit the very source from which all intelligence proceeds, must go down to the very matrix of all rationality. The modern pan-logistic philosophers of the West have the hardihood to declare that because we, by the very constitution of our minds, are committed to a rational understanding of the universe, the rational is the only way in which the deepest meaning of the universe can be revealed to us. They fail to perceive—and this is their besetting sin—that rational or conceptual knowledge itself presupposes and rests upon a basic intelligence which lends it life and sustenance. The necessity of positing a deeper and more basic intelligence than reason can well be understood if we examine carefully the discursive and relational character of conceptual knowledge. The various concepts that enter into and combine in every single act of

judgment or unit of knowledge, are all isolated, distinct from one another, and appear successively. This process of synthesising the several distinct concepts and welding them together into a single act of judgment presupposes a medium of intelligence which retains each preceding concept and gives birth to the one succeeding it.

The one sovereign way of attaining truth, therefore, that Hindu thinkers teach is to approach or intuitively realise the very fountain-head of knowledge, the Atman—'आत्मानं विजानीय अन्यो वाचो विमुञ्चय'। But how to know the Atman, the Eternal Knower which is the presupposition and condition of all knowledge? As Yajñavalkya exclaims "विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात् येनेदं सर्वं विजनाति तं केन विजानीयात्" The problem of turning back upon the subject or making the subject itself an object of knowledge, has been a vertigo, both to the eastern and western philosophers. Apropos of this difficulty Kant wrote "This I or he or it, this something that thinks, is nothing but the idea of a transcendental subject of thought =  $x$ , which is known only through the thoughts that are its predicates, and which, apart from them, cannot be conceived at all. We turn round and round it in a perpetual circle, for we can make no judgment about it, without making use of it in our judgment."

While most western philosophers acquiesced in the thought that the Self is ever inaccessible to our comprehension, the Hindu thinkers

made it their Holy Grail, the dearest object of their quest. If the Self, the ultimate source of knowledge, is not comprehended, we are doomed to ever imperfect knowledge. And they made the comprehension of the Self, the Atman, a possibility not of course through discursive understanding, but through intuition. They found out that the Self can intuit itself. Self-intuition or Atmajnana was the goal of all their Sadhanas.

### III

The attainment of this goal is possible only by a course of practical discipline or persistent Sadhana. Consciousness that goes out, as it were, in the apprehension of the external world, must be indrawn to itself in order to apprehend its own inmost core. An inward regress to the Inner Shrine of the Atman is the characteristic method of approach to Reality, taught by the Upanishadic sages. The Atman, or the ultimate principle of consciousness, which gives life to the mind and the senses, must return to its own unfathomed depths to see its inner light. Atmajnana or Self-intuition is a return journey, the Self's coming to itself from the world of its own manifestation. It is, in the words of the Poet,

"Hushing life's myriad utterance,  
Back to the all-enfolding Word."

In order that the inner Light of the soul may shine, the operations of the mind and the senses must be stopped. In the lines we quote below, the Kathopanishad gives a very apt description of how

the inward journey is made, of how we can arrive at the Inner Shrine.

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसि प्राज्ञस्तच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।

ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत्तच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥”

That is, we should stop the operations of all our faculties by merging the function of each outer faculty into the inner one that conditions it. Speech should be sunk into the mind, the mind into intelligence, and intelligence into the silence of the Atman. We must recede backwards from the last manifestation of intelligence to the Supreme Intelligence, the ultimate principle of consciousness, the Atman, the sanctum sanctorum. In speech all our intelligible experience finds expression; all that is in any way intelligible to us we express in speech, in words. But thought precedes speech and is the condition of speech. Speech has its birth in thought, in the mind. It is the inner thought-activity that in outward manifestation is speech. If therefore thinking is to be intensified, its out-going energy in the form of speech must be conserved by stopping speech. To intensify thought, speech must be stopped. It is a matter of common experience that when we think seriously we remain silent. Similarly, intelligence precedes and is the condition of thought. We have endeavoured above to show that thought-knowledge or conceptual knowledge presupposes a more basic intelligence. It is this intelligence that expresses and manifests itself in thought-forms. This intelligence can be in-

tensified if thought-activity is stopped. But when the pure principle of consciousness back of this intelligence is itself to be manifested, even this veil of intelligence must be removed. Speech, mind, and the intelligence are the corridors through which we must pass in order to reach the Inner Shrine, the Atman. The Upanishads often reiterate the saying that the Atman is concealed in the inmost cavity of our being—‘निहितो गुहायाम्’; and we are asked to meditate thereupon.

This method of attaining spiritual vision is not unknown to the mystics of the West. Eckhart, for example, says “When jointly are the faculties withdrawn from their business, their objects all, then will the word be spoken. Hence it is said ‘In the midst of silence was the secret word spoken unto me.’” To take another example, here is a passage from the Pseudo Dionysius in the fifth century.

“And thou, dear Timothy, in thy intent practice of the mystical contemplations, leave behind both thy senses and thy intellectual operations and all things known by sense and intellect, and all things which are not and which are, and set thyself, so far as may be, to uniting thyself in unknowing with Him who is above all being and knowledge; for by being purely free and absolute, out of self and of all things, thou shalt be led up to the ray of the divine darkness, stripped of all and loosed from all.” Albertus Magnus, the great scholar of the Middle Ages, opens his treatise

De Adhaerendo Deo, with these words: "When St. John says that God is a Spirit and that He must be worshipped in spirit, he means that the mind must be cleared of all images. When thou prayest shut thy doors, *i.e.*, the door of thy senses. Keep them barred and bolted against all phantasms and images. Nothing pleases God more than a mind free from all occupations and distractions." This state of withdrawal into the inner domain of the Soul, it should be remembered, is not a state of being inferior to the reasoning state, but one immensely superior to it; as Plato says, "The Soul reasons best, when as much as possible, it comes to be alone with itself, bidding good-bye to the body, and to the utmost of its power rejecting communion with it."

Thus man attains his highest Illumination by realising his own inmost Self. Today the very word religion has become an opprobrium. The modern world is utterly disgusted with its external paraphernalia, its

theological tenets which cannot be brought into harmony with modern science and modern knowledge, and the immense multiplicity of sects into which it has divided mankind. So much so that a modern scientific and philosophical writer, Prof. Whitehead, goes the length of saying that 'religion is the last refuge of human savagery.' (*Vide* Whitehead's Religion in the Making) Under such circumstances, we cannot too strongly emphasise the importance of placing before the modern world that idea of religion which was given prominence to by the Upanishadic sages, *viz.*, religion as consisting essentially in self-realisation. Religion as self-realisation does away with all undue clinging to external paraphernalia, does away with the blind acceptance of irrational theological dogmas, and makes religion consist solely, in the words of Swami Vivekananda, in "the manifestation of the divinity already in man." May God help us all to realise the divinity within us!

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

**I** went to Baghbazar one morning with a basket of flowers. I offered them to the Holy Mother. She was exceedingly happy and began to decorate the image of Sri Ramakrishna. Some of the flowers were blue. She took these in her hands and said, "Ah, what a pretty colour! There was a girl at Dakshineswar named Asha. One

day she came to the temple garden and picked a red flower from a plant with dark leaves. She cried, 'Dear me! Such a red flower on a plant with dark leaves! Goodness gracious! What a strange creation of God!' Sri Ramakrishna saw her and said, 'My dear child! What is the matter with you? Why are you weeping like that?' She could

hardly utter a word. She was weeping incessantly. Sri Ramakrishna at last pacified her." The Holy Mother was in an exalted mood and said, "Look at these flowers with a blue colour! How can one decorate God without such nice flowers!" She took a handful of flowers and offered these to the image of Sri Ramakrishna. A few flowers dropped at her feet before they were offered to the image. She cried, "Dear me! How they have dropped at my feet before I could offer them to the Lord!" "It is very nice," I said. Then I thought, "To you Sri Ramakrishna may be a higher being; but we do not make any distinction between you and him."

A widowed lady came into the room. I asked the Mother about her. The Mother said, "She has taken initiation from me about a month ago. She had accepted another teacher before. But then she realised her own mistake and came here for initiation. I could not convince her that all teachers are one. The same power of God works through all of them."

After our noon-day meal we were resting for a while when the Mother began to talk to us about her old days at Kamarpukur. "I was quite young," said she, "when one day Sri Ramakrishna came to Kamarpukur from Calcutta with stomach trouble. During the early hours of the morning he would wake up from sleep and tell us about the dishes I should prepare for his noon-day meals. I would

follow his directions. One day, I found that I had not a particular spice with which he wanted the vegetables flavoured. My sister-in-law (Sri Ramakrishna's brother's wife) asked me to cook without that spice. Sri Ramakrishna heard those words and said, "How is it possible? If you have not the spice, procure it from the market. You cannot cook the curry without the spice which is necessary for it. I sacrificed the rich dishes of Dakshineswar, the fish curry and the rice pudding and came here for the flavour of that spice, and you want to deprive me of that! This won't do!" My sister-in-law felt ashamed and sent for the spice. The Brahmani, the woman-teacher of Sri Ramakrishna, was then with us. He addressed her as Mother. I was afraid of her and looked upon her as my mother-in-law. She was very fond of red-peppers. She cooked her own dishes—all hot stuff. She offered me those preparations. I would silently eat these and wipe out the tears from my eyes. She would ask me how I liked those things. I feared her and said, 'Very nice!' My sister-in-law would remark, 'No, these are very hot.' I noticed that the Brahmani was displeased with that remark. She would say, 'Why do you say so? My daughter approves of these dishes. Nothing can please you. I will not give you my curries any more.'" The Holy Mother began to laugh as she narrated these incidents.

The conversation again turned to flowers. The Mother said, "One

day while living at Dakhineswar, I made a big garland of seven strands with some red flowers and some jasmine flowers. I soaked the garland in water in a stone bowl and quickly the buds turned into full blossoms. I sent the garland to the Kali Temple to adorn the image of the Divine Mother. The ornaments were taken off from the body of Kali and she was decorated with the garland. Sri Ramakrishna came to the temple. He at once fell into an ecstatic mood to see the beauty of Kali so much enhanced by the flowers. Again and again he said, 'Ah! These flowers are so nicely set off by the dark complexion of the Divine Mother!' 'Who has made the garland?' he asked. Some one mentioned me. He said, 'Go and bring her to the temple.' As I came near the steps I found some of the male-devotees there, Balaram Babu, Suren Babu and others. I felt extremely bashful and became anxious to hide myself. I took shelter behind the maid and was about to go up the temple by the back steps. Sri Ramakrishna noticed this instantly and said, 'Don't try those steps. The other day a fisherwoman was climbing those steps and slipped. She fractured her bones and died. Come by these front steps.' The devotees heard those words and made room for me. I entered the temple and found Sri Ramakrishna singing, his voice trembling with love and emotion." A few women-devotees entered the room and the conversation stopped here. It was time for me

to take leave. Again the Mother began to talk about God-realisation. She said, "Do you know, my child, what it is like? It is just like candy in the hand of a child. Some people beg the child to part with it. But he does not care to give it to them. Still he easily hands it over to another whom he likes. A man performs utmost austerity throughout his whole life to realise God but he does not succeed whereas another man gets his realisation practically without any effort. It depends upon the Grace of God. He bestows His Grace upon anyone He likes. Grace is an important thing."

\* \* \*

The Holy Mother intended to visit our home at Ballygunj today. The arrangement had been made yesterday. We have purchased for her a new set of things, a small rug, mat, marble cups and plates, etc. We had no sleep during the night; such was the thrill of our joy. It was arranged that the Mother would come in the afternoon. S.....went to Baghbazar in the morning and waited there to inform us, if necessary, of any change in the time of her coming to our place. We finished our ordinary routine work early in the day and eagerly awaited her arrival. The small rug was spread for the Holy Mother. Flowers were kept around it. The whole house was made pure by sprinkling Ganges water about. We made flower garlands and bouquets. We were eagerly looking

forward to her arrival. At last we heard the rumbling sound of her carriage and came downstairs. The carriage stopped at the door. She had been looking at us with sweet and laughing eyes. No sooner did she get down from the carriage than all became eager to prostrate before her.

The Holy Mother was accompanied by Golap-Ma, Nalini, Radhu and a few monks and Brahmacharins. I escorted her to the room kept apart for her and prostrated. The Mother said, "Have you finished your meals, my darling? I tried my utmost to hurry up; but it was not possible for me to come earlier." She caressed me by touching the chin. I had no time to spend with her. I had to cook a few sweets.

A gramophone was being played upstairs. In the midst of my work, I snatched a few moments and went to see the Mother. She was very happy to hear the gramophone. "What a wonderful machine!" she said, and was as happy as a child. It was a very warm day. She lay on a straw mattress in the verandah and others were seated by her side. A marble tumbler with iced-water was placed near her. She was sipping it now and then. She saw me and cried out, "Hallo! Come here and take a little iced-water. The day is warm." I drank some water and felt refreshed. I was in a hurry, for it seemed almost impossible to finish the work.

The offerings were placed in the adjoining room after dusk. The Mother asked Golap-Ma to offer them to God. She said, "Why should I do so when you are here?" The Holy Mother herself came to the room to offer the food and began to praise the various preparations arranged before her. We were all happy at her joy. After the offering was over the Mother and other guests sat down for their meals. She finished her meal before the others. She sat on a reclining chair in the porch and said to me, "Where is my betel-leaf?" I had been waiting upon other guests, but I hurried up and gave her the betel-leaf. I was ashamed to find that she had to ask for it. I said to Sumati, "Why did you not wait near her with the betel-leaf? You saw me busy with other things." After a while the Mother found me alone and said with tenderness, "You could not rest even for a moment. You were very busy. Come to our place one day and bring your mother." My mother was with us that day and it was her good fortune to meet the Holy Mother.

It was time to take leave. The Holy Mother was unwilling to go by a motor car. Once the car she had been riding in ran over a dog. But it would be very late at night to reach Baghbazar by a horse-carriage. That would inconvenience everybody. She agreed at last. With hearty blessings for us all, she set out for Baghbazar.



## ANANDA-BRAHMA VADA—II

*By Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M. A.*

*(Continued from previous issue)*

### **Physical Plane of Knowledge and Materialistic Conception of Brahman**

**B**HRIGU, who was yearning to know the true character of Brahman, was first instructed by his revered father to "will to know" by means of necessary self-discipline (*Tapasya*). As a result of his first course of moral, intellectual and spiritual self-discipline, Bhrigu arrived at a materialistic conception of Brahman. In this lowest plane of philosophical thought, the inherent demand of his reason for the ultimate cause of all phenomena and for the fundamental unity underlying all diversities, was apparently satisfied by the general conception of one objective Matter, which was found to be the source, the substance and the resting place of all particular objects of experience including the living bodies. In this plane the dependence of the thinking, feeling and willing powers upon the physical organism appears to be so real and essential, that the knowing subject may naturally be led to regard the physical body as the self of man and the mental functions as evolved out of it. The life and mind cannot function except in a sound body, but the body remains even when the life and mind cease to function, and is reduced to pure

Matter. Hence it is concluded that the body is the ground of the life and mind. The physical organism, again, is nothing but the transformation of food (*anna*), and food is nothing but Matter. Thus, as the diversities of the inorganic world are merely different forms in which Matter appears, so also the diversities of living, moving and thinking beings grow out of and depend upon Matter. Matter is found to be the only permanent entity in this changing world. Hence Matter, which we experience as food (*anna*) for our body, senses, mind and reason and on which we depend for our existence, must be accepted as the Supreme Reality, Brahman. To the human soul in this plane of self-development, Brahman reveals Itself as Matter, the world appears purely material.

It is to be observed that in the plane of thought in which the knowing subject identifies itself with the physical organism, it cannot help accepting sense experience as the most reliable source of knowledge about the true nature of objects and as the basis of all inferential knowledge. In the speculations of this plane the physical organism of the knowing subject stands at the centre of the objective world, determines its outlook upon

Reality and practically serves as the standard of truth. What we call scientific knowledge of the present age has scarcely transcended this plane. But Bhrigu, having reached the ultimate ground and unity that could be comprehended in this plane, found that the inner urge of his reason was not satisfied and he could not feel himself self-fulfilled. So he approached his father again and wanted further light upon the true character of Brahman.

### **Vital Plane of Knowledge and Conception of Brahman as Prana**

The sage Varuna instructed the truth-seeking son to undergo a further course of deeper self-discipline and meditation. He remarked that practically speaking *Tapas* itself was Brahman, for Brahman revealed itself to *Tapas*. Bhrigu obeyed his father's instruction, attempted by *Tapas* to dive deeper into Truth, found out the inadequacy of his present conclusion and ascended to a higher plane of thought. This time he learnt to look upon the objective world from the Vital plane, and conceived *Prana* or Life as constituting the true character of Brahman. In this plane, matter appears to him to be nothing but food and embodiment of Life, which is the Reality for which matter exists. It is Life which, being immanent in matter, determines all its changes and transformations for its own self-manifestation and self-development. The uniformity of changes and operations in the material world, the order and harmony found in

all its departments, the organic inter-relation among the different orders of phenomena, the development of the various species of beings in accordance with definite laws,—all these indicate a central immanent Life-Power controlling and systematising all operations of matter and organising the apparent plurality of material objects into a living cosmos. As Life immanent in the minute particle of plant, animal or human seed (protoplasm) is the cause of the self-development, self-multiplication, self-organisation and self-adaptation of the plant, animal and human body, so there must be a Universal Life-Power which is the cause of similar operations found in all the departments of the universe and the systematisation of all these operations of all these departments into development of One whole Universal Organism.

Not only this; the different orders of apparently lifeless material objects in the world, when viewed closely, are found to be in different stages of preparation for the manifestation of Life, which, though immanent, is concealed in them. The inner changes going on in them are in the direction of evolution of Life, which becomes manifested in unveiled forms in organic nature. The different orders of conscious and self-conscious creatures, on the other hand, represent higher and higher stages of Life's self-manifestation. Before the appearance of diversities, Life had been in an unmanifested state. It is the inner law of Life, which regulates the courses

of transformation and development of its diverse manifestations and appears as diverse laws of nature, viewed from the standpoints of the different departments of its manifestations. At the time of dissolution, all particular forms of existence lose themselves in the undivided (*avibhakta*), unmanifested (*avyakta*) existence of one Life. This viewpoint led Bhṛigu to conclude that *Prana* or Life satisfied the requirements of the definition of Brahman and was therefore the Absolute Reality. To the knowing subject in this plane of self-development, the objective Reality, Brahman, revealed itself as *Prana*.

In the Physical plane dead matter was found to be the source and substance of all objects of experience and was therefore conceived to be the Absolute Reality. But no satisfactory explanation was obtained for the evolution of life, consciousness, will and reason from dead and inert matter and even for the uniformity of changes, the wonderful adjustment of forces and the reign of laws in the material world. In the plane of Life this explanation is found out. The very conception of Life is that it is a self-evolving, self-multiplying, self-organising and self-preserving Reality. By the power inherent in itself, it passes from the unembodied, unmanifested state to the embodied manifested state, from the potential state to the actual state, from the state of simplicity and homogeneity to the state of complexity and heterogeneity, from the

state of relative incoherence to the state of greater and greater coherence. In the course of its self-development, Life becomes conscious and rational. Thus, if Life is recognised as the real essence of matter, the phenomenal world can be more satisfactorily explained. Moreover, the knowing subject experiences the objective world as more akin to itself; the gulf between the two is much narrowed down, it finds greater peace in its knowledge of the world.

#### **Mental Plane of Knowledge and Conception of Brahman as Mind**

Bhṛigu communicated the result of his meditation to his father; but the latter could not accept it as the final conclusion. He instructed the persevering son to further purify his body and mind, to make his intelligence still more transparent and to make a still deeper inquiry into the real character of Brahman. Finding that he had not yet attained the ultimate truth, Bhṛigu engaged himself in stricter self-discipline and deeper meditation. The fallacy of his present conclusion became clear to him and he rose to a higher plane of knowledge. He found out that the Universal Life, which manifested itself in the sublime and beautiful system of the harmoniously adjusted plurality of diverse orders of inorganic, organic, sentient and rational beings, which regulated all the forces of nature and organised their activities with a deeply conceived design for the achievement of some ulterior pur-

pose, could not be of the nature of an unconscious Power blind to the past and the future, ignorant of the ideal to be realised and unaware of the contrivances adopted. It must be of the nature of a conscious will, a Mind, realising itself through Life and its functions. When an ideal is found to determine the character of the actual, what ought to be is found to regulate the course of what is. When the present is not only an inevitable product of the past, but also a preparation for the future, it must be inferred that a Mind is working behind the process. Further, Life can evolve out of itself in course of its self-development only those things which are potentially present in its nature from the very beginning. Accordingly, Mind could not have been evolved out of it, if Mind had not existed in an unmanifested form in the essential nature of Life itself. Hence, Life which develops itself into Mind must have been a mental reality in its inner character. As Life as an inherent ideal determines the course of development of apparently inorganic matter, so Mind as an inherent ideal determines the course of development of Life. Thus, Mind is the essence of Life, and so of matter.

It also becomes obvious in this plane of thought that all objects of experience—animate and inanimate, sentient and insentient,—become intelligible only in terms of Mental categories. If the characteristics which the Mind contributes or attributes to those objects be with-

drawn, they become characterless entities or non-entities. The objective world therefore appears as a Mental system (*Manomaya*), existing for, by and to the Mind. It owes its existence to the free, conscious, self-manifesting activity of thought and will of Mind, which manifests itself in this apparently pluralistic universe progressively through the inorganic, organic, sentient and self-conscious stages, with the design for the realisation of the Ideal immanent in its essential nature. The world process, in all its bewilderingly diverse departments, is governed by the same Mind and directed towards the same ultimate end. When the final purpose will be achieved, the universe will exhibit itself as One Mental Organism, with its ideal fully realised. Mind is thus the material cause, the efficient cause, the final cause and the formal cause of the phenomenal world. These considerations made Bhṛigu conclude that Mind is Brahman.

In the Physical plane, the world of experience appeared to be governed by the law of phenomenal causation and to be the playground of physical, mechanical, chemical, electrical and magnetic forces without any aim or ideal to achieve. Viewed from the Vital plane, the phenomenal causation and the operation of all these forces appeared to be determined from within by a central Life-power in accordance with the law of Biological causation. Here Teleology was discovered in the heart of the mechanism of the universe.

But when reason ascends to the Mental plane, Biological causation also is found to be subordinate to Rational, Moral and Aesthetic causation. The universe is conceived not merely as a living organism, but a rational, moral and aesthetic order, in which all the parts are so determined and developed, all the forces are so governed and adjusted, that the whole system may advance towards the realisation in itself of the ultimate ideal of Perfect Truth, Perfect Beauty and Perfect Goodness. The highest ideal which the human mind seeks to realise for its own perfection appears in this plane to be the ideal immanent in the universe and determining the course of the world-process.

Thus it appears that one Supreme Mind, by the infinite and irresistible power of His thought and will, is manifesting Himself in innumerable inorganic, organic and sentient beings with the differentiating characteristics of each of them, and is governing them all in order to realise through them the ideals which are operating within Him. The conception of such a Supreme Mind involves the idea of Personality, in as much as this Mind is self-conscious and self-determining, distin-

guishing Himself from, though immanently operating in, His phenomenal self-manifestations. It is evident that this Mind is omnipotent and omniscient, there being nothing to limit His thought and will.

In this plane, the subject finds the Absolute Reality very much allied to itself. It is conscious of itself as a Mind—as a thinking, feeling and willing being, longing for truth, beauty and goodness; it experiences in this plane that the Absolute Reality—the ground and substance of the universe—is also of the nature of Mind,—that thought, emotion and will, working for the realisation of truth, beauty and goodness, constitute the essential character of the Absolute Reality, Brahman. The man inquiring into the nature of Brahman becomes aware at this stage that he, as a finite mind, stands face to face with an Infinite Mind, and that no real world of space and time with bewildering diversities separates him from Brahman. For the Infinite Mind constitutes the very substance of these diversities. The physical world becomes transparent to him and shows everywhere the operations of the Mind and the Hand of Providence.

*(To be concluded)*

---

## GAUTAMA THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

*By Swami Ranganathananda*

**T**HE month of Vaisakh is sanctified by the birth-events of two of the greatest of India's sons—Gautama Buddha and Sankaracharya. If any two personalities of ancient Indian history have claimed the largest attention and unstinted praise of modern thinkers, it is these two individuals. The thoughts and lives of these two personalities have been dynamic factors in their own times; but today, under more auspicious circumstances, they seem to exert a still greater influence on contemporary thought and life. What is that enduring element in them which seems to defy time itself and what is the nature of its appeal to the modern mind? We shall try to find an answer to this question in the following pages.

It is only a few decades since India has awakened from her deluded estimates of Buddha's teachings. A section of Indian orthodoxy went to the extent of painting Buddha as the incarnation of a demon. And for a thousand years his teachings were viewed with suspicion. It was Sankara who showed—mildly though—that Buddha and the Vedanta teach nearly the self-same truth. Still later, in the thirteenth century, Jayadeva sang his praise as an incarnation of Vishnu. But the real place of Buddha's teachings among those of India's galaxy

of saints and sages has begun to be correctly understood and appreciated only since the beginning of the nineteenth century. And this much-desired change of attitude was in great part due to India's contact with western culture and the consequent adoption of an evolutionary view of Indian history.

What is Buddha's place in this evolutionary setting? What needs did he come to fulfil and how did he fulfil them? To answer this question we have to go further back and consider the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads. The Vedic age is marked by an excessive insistence on the performance of sacrifices bearing their fruits in the shape of felicities in heaven. But the development of philosophical thought in the Upanishads is marked by a critical estimate of the value of these sacrifices as well as the shifting of emphasis to an ethical life subserving a philosophical goal. The sanction of ethics is sought in a lofty metaphysics. In place of the imaginations of the early Vedic Rishis in their efforts at chartering the heavens, the Upanishads substitute a keen and penetrating search after Truth and Reality following a most rigorous and scientific procedure. Thus there emerges the sublime philosophy of the Upani-

shads based on a rigorous ethical life—Sadhanachatushtaya and Tat-twa Vichara.

But the Upanishadic protests against Vedic ritualism could not make themselves felt and hence we find Sri Krishna in the second chapter of the Gita reviving again that protest, but this time transforming the whole scheme of Vedic ritualism by the magic wand of his philosophy into a wonderful and effective system of ethics. The Karma Marga is transformed into the Karma Yoga. The great achievement of Sri Krishna may be said to be this—that he exalted the ethical life far above the life wedded to barren theology and formalism and based it firmly on philosophical foundations. In the whole history of India this struggle of life to rise above theology and formalism can be witnessed time and again and the appearance of great men at such epochs has effected this release.

After the time of Sri Krishna, life in India found itself again under the ancient theology. Ritualism asserted itself and vain disputations and wranglings combined with caste exclusiveness became the order of the day. This Vedic formalism and social exclusiveness have come down to our own times invigorated by the touches which the Mimamsakas gave them. This can be characterised as the static element in Indian orthodox tradition. At various epochs the dynamic element has asserted itself from the side of philosophy. But often

philosophy and the philosopher who have gone to release life from this crushing tradition have both been drenched and soiled in this traditional flood. Sankara, for instance, who may be considered to be the greatest opponent of this tradition in later times, and who has no doubt succeeded much in making philosophy the guide of life,—even he has been caught up in the meshes of this traditionalism. Probably, the time was not ripe for such a change; more favourable circumstances were necessary and these are available only to-day,—circumstances brought about by the modern developments of scientific ways of life and a vigorous and critical thought based on scientific methods. The philosophical spirit in India today has this task before it.

The only enchanting figure in the historic period who seems to have successfully, for a time at least, resisted this tendency and lifted the crushing burden on Indian life, is Buddha. The ethics of the Upanishads and the teaching of the Gita find a brilliant echo in him. By eschewing all disputations and wranglings over mysteries and by providing a simple and wholesome ethical code Buddha gave freedom to the individual to grow. And by ignoring caste distinctions and disabilities and by a democratic appeal he paved the way for the gathering of India's scattered forces and bringing them to one focus under Asoka. Historically, this was the most glorious period of Indian

national life, and Buddha was its inspirer.

"Do good, and be good," so teaches Buddha. The ritualist offered temptations to go to heaven as the motive of all work. Sri Krishna discards this motive as petty—'Kripanāh phalahetavah,' and substitutes in its place self-purification and the good of the world.

'Sacrifice, charity and austerity are purifying to the wise.'

'As do the unwise, attached to work, act, so should the wise act, O descendent of Bharata, (but) without attachment, desirous of the guidance of the world.\*' Buddha takes up this idea and works it up to its logical conclusion. 'For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many,' he dedicates his life. Here there is no question even of personal salvation. He was willing to give up his life to save even a poor goat. His compassion knew no limits. His heart embraced not only men but also animals and even trees and plants. This utter self-abnegation and expansion of heart embracing every aspect of creation in a flood of love and compassion is the greatest contribution of Buddha to the thought of the world. No character in the history of the world can be compared to him in this. It is this aspect of his life and teaching that is attracting the attention of Western thinkers. American Humanism has

drawn much of its inspiration from his personality.

In India itself, as Sir Radhakrishnan says, Buddha has begun to be an attraction and an inspiration to all her intellectuals. Today when a fresh attempt is being made to awaken India from her long sleep and start her on the road to progress and prosperity, the importance of Buddha's teaching of unselfish love and service,—the good of the many, the happiness of the many,—is increasingly being recognised. His life and example are supplying the driving power for all humanitarian activities. Indian thinkers are unanimous in their opinion that India must understand and follow Buddha if she is to come to her full stature. Says Swami Vivekananda: "It was the great Buddha, who never cared for the Dualist gods, and who has been called an atheist and materialist, who yet was ready to give up his body for a poor goat. That Man set in motion the highest moral ideas any nation can have. Wherever there is a moral code, it is a ray of light from that Man. We cannot force the great hearts of the world into narrow limits, and keep them there, especially at this time in the history of humanity, when there is a degree of intellectual development such as was never dreamed of even a hundred years ago, when a wave of scientific knowledge has arisen, which nobody, even fifty years ago, would have dreamed of. By trying to force people into narrow limits you degrade them into animals and

\* Gita, Chapter 18 verse 5, and Chapter 3, verse 25.



unthinking masses. You kill their moral life. What is now wanted is a combination of the greatest heart with the highest intellectuality, of infinite love with infinite knowledge."\*

But though today India is admiring Buddha and trying to follow in his footsteps, the attitude was different immediately after his passing away. The Vedic tradition had, at this time, fallen into the hands of the Mimamsakas and the priests invented stories about Buddha making him the incarnation of a demon. India was taught to discard Buddha and his lofty teachings and go back to the old formalism and theology. This she did with consequences, sad and serious, from which we are suffering even today. The selfishness, egoism and narrowness of heart which characterise the misguided section of the orthodox mind in India today, acting as a bar sinister against all social progress and well-being, can be traced back to this banishment of the Buddha Idea from India. Swami Vivekananda writes in one of his epistles: "The Lord once more came to you as Buddha and taught you how to feel, how to sympathise with the poor, the miserable, the sinner, but you heard Him not. Your priests invented the horrible story that the Lord was here for deluding demons with false doctrines! True indeed, but we are the demons, not those that believed. And just as the Jews denied Lord Jesus and are since

that day wandering over the world as homeless beggars, tyrannised over by everybody, so you are bond-slaves to any nation that thinks it worth-while to rule over you."\*

Yes, India has paid dearly for her delusion. Today conditions have changed. Science is compelling a revision of all old notions and is paving the way for a changed social and religious outlook. Authority and tradition which pressed down upon philosophical thought and social life are gradually wearing away under the blasting light of scientific criticism. Traditional philosophy and authoritarian ethics have lost all charm for minds cultured in the scientific spirit. What is needed at the present time is a philosophy based on pure reason, and ethics based on the highest metaphysics. Modern Indian thinkers find in Vedanta and in Buddha the necessary inspiration in both these directions. Buddha is no more considered as an alien and a rebel but a bold and fearless thinker and a reformer of Hinduism. Buddha represents the Upanishadic spirit and typifies the ideal of Nishkama Karma of the Gita. To quote Swami Vivekananda again: "Let me tell you, in conclusion, a few words about one man who actually carried this teaching of Karma Yoga into practice. That man is Buddha. He is the one man who ever carried this into perfect practice. All the prophets of the world, except Buddha,

\*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda Volume 2, page 149.

\*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume 5, page 12.

had external motives to move them to unselfish action. The prophets of the world, with his single exception, may be divided into two sets, one set holding that they are incarnations of God come down on earth, and the other holding that they are only messengers from God; and both draw their *impetus* for work from outside, expect reward from outside, however highly spiritual may be the language they use. But Buddha is the only prophet who said, 'I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is.....' He is the ideal Karma Yogi, acting entirely without motive and the history of humanity shows him to have been the greatest man ever born; beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested. He is the first great reformer the world has seen. He was the first who dared to say, 'Believe not because some old manuscripts are produced, believe not because it is your national belief, because you have been made to believe it from your childhood, but reason it all out, and after you have analysed it, then, if you find that it will do good to one and all, believe it, live up to it, and help others to live up to it.' He works best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else; and

when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. This man represents the very highest ideal of Karma Yoga."

The sublime philosophy of the Upanishads and the teachings of Sri Krishna in the Gita on the one hand, and the lofty life and inspiring personality of Gautama Buddha on the other, are the two factors which are behind the foremost movements working for Indian national reconstruction. The Upanishadic teaching of the Oneness of all existence and the Gita emphasis on a life devoted to the realisation of this Basic Unity, are the two undying thoughts which are coming down to us and making an irresistible appeal to the modern mind, inside as well as outside India. The brightest example of their practical application is Buddha himself. It is no wonder, therefore, that in these days, when the nation is attempting to follow the teaching of practical Vedanta, it is looking up to Lord Buddha for inspiration. His life reads as a commentary on these verses of the Gita :

" Even in this life they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose minds are firm-fixed

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥

समं पश्यन्ति सर्वं समवस्थितमधीश्वरम्

न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥

on the sameness of everything. For God is pure and the same to all, and therefore, such are said to be living in God."

" Thus seeing the Lord the same everywhere, he, the sage, does not hurt the Self by the Self, and so goes to the highest goal."

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD ?\*

*By A. S.*

WHEN the Peace Treaty was signed in 1918, the weary nations of the world, those that were actively engaged in the fray and even those that were outside it, made a solemn resolution that the fair face of this earth should not henceforth be disfigured by bloody fights which are but the relics of a pre-historic past, of a barbaric and savage stage, but that they should in future devote themselves to constructive work, living as friendly neighbours, settling their differences, if any, by negotiation and arbitration through a neutral body, with legal sanction behind it to enforce its decisions. Wars which have proved to be the most costly and wasteful of human institutions, and the least pardonable survival of less intelligent ages, should be abolished by common consent as a savage anachronism. There should be a new economic planning of life and nations, big and small, should be vouchsafed safety and protection to live in peace and harmony, the service of science being fully utilised in this great endeavour. Many years have not rolled by since this

pious resolve was made, and yet we find ourselves in the titanic grip of a world-depression far more serious than an unusually severe economic crisis, which reveals a permanent and increasingly dangerous disorder in the economic life. The conditions which prevailed in Europe just before the Great War of 1914, are found reflected in the present-day relations among the Powers, though in a different and somewhat modified form. While the League of Nations has done valuable services in educating nations and peoples in the idea of international justice, it has not been able to impose its will on those who are war-minded. It is within our recent knowledge how in the matter of certain disputes between Japan and China, the League has shown itself quite feeble and powerless to afford security against the occurrence of armed conflicts. Hitler and the Nazis gravely threaten the precarious stability of Germany. Alsace-Lorraine will welcome the sound of the German bugle; a new coup in Austria may at any time raise a more desperate crime for co-opera-

\* Can We Save Civilisation ? : By Joseph McCabe. The Search Publishing Company Ltd., 6, Old Gloucester Street, London, W. O. I.

tion with Germany than France can silence; the world will have seriously to consider the industrial development of Russia with a huge body of exalted workers; in Italy and Poland, the thrones of the Dictators are insecure. These in broad outline are the conditions we find at present in the so-called civilised countries of the West. Strange world-weather this for the period of convalescence which the nations promised themselves after the Great War!

Mr. McCabe is not unmindful of what might happen in Asia. He says: "We are bound to recognise the possibility of a united and scientifically equipped Asia, perhaps in alliance with outlawed Russia, calling Europe to account for its conduct in the East during the last hundred years. Will this civilisation of ours survive the menace of its increasing internal disorders and of the gigantic hostile forces that one can surely discern in the thin mists of the near future?" One might have seen in recent happenings in Asia and the Far East how Japan is closely imitating pre-war Germany. Quite recently she claimed the sole responsibility for the maintenance of peace in the East and is evidently out to establish a hegemony of the Orient, which in the end would mean the subjugation of China and her reduction to the state of a vassal of Japan. Who knows that India is safe from her ambitions? But this is by the way.

In a well-written volume of 200 and odd pages, the author who is

evidently well equipped for his task by years of study in science and history and experience gained by decades of travel in various countries, presents a vivid picture of the present world-crisis in its broad, historical perspective, with suggestions to make clear the ground and hints for general lines of action. Mr. McCabe does not claim to belong to any organisation, political or economic, and has therefore the added advantage of viewing the problems from a detached standpoint.

In no other peace-period of history has there been so swift and catastrophic a blight of the world's industrial, commercial and financial life. And so far as the present crisis is industrial and commercial, as it mainly is, it is admittedly due to the lack of correlation between production and consumptive capacity. Piles of unwanted goods are heaped up in the warehouses and stores of the manufacturing countries. Experts tell us that the lack of adjustment of a production that was immensely enriched by science, is the predominant cause of the crisis in America, where it is most acute, and one of the principal causes elsewhere. It has led to almost as much distress as the Great War. While the fact is admitted, there is hopeless disagreement, evasiveness and even nervousness among experts, scientists and statesmen as to the remedies to be applied to ease the situation. And one of the outstanding features of this catastrophic period, the author attributes to the

pathetic futility of statesmen and politicians. He says truly that until there is some control, co-ordinating production in the economic world, some check on the impulse to enlarge production, we shall go from crisis to crisis, probably with increasing distress. Millions of men, their wives and children, live on the ragged edge of existence, because they cannot have access to the stored piles of surplus goods. They cannot produce, because they must not produce; they must not produce, because they cannot purchase. Modern life in the West has reached this paradoxical state, a large supply of unwanted goods on one side and stark penury on the other. We agree that the best brains available must be set to solve this paradox of life, and an economic system devised in which every worker could be enlisted. The rise in production will then be automatically balanced by a rise in purchasing capacity. Then only could the increasing application of science to production be justified. What is required is a true scientific spirit in the ordering of national and international life, not simply advance in the technique of science. And if the claim made on behalf of science that it has been responsible for a prodigious advance of prosperity, is well founded, the world should not be in the predicament in which it finds itself, but there should be an all-round enrichment and betterment of life. The fault is not that of science, but of its methods, instruments and application.

The author makes a serious indictment, not without justification, that if we are ceasing to derive all the advantages from the service of science, it is due to the mismanagement of our most weighty affairs by politicians through our Parliaments, which have become the dumping ground of self-seeking men of inferior or no ability and with no character. The insecurity of the political career, with its long periods of unemployment and theatricality and hollowness of party struggles, most naturally repels men of the highest ability from engaging themselves in the work of government through Parliaments and Councils.

So it comes to this that the political mechanism needs to be reconstructed on a rational basis, and the controllers and directors of the national life must be men endowed with large hearts and wide vision. The scientific method should be extended from the technique of production and distribution to the whole plan of life. In this view of the conception of science and the true scientific spirit, reckless rivalry between nations should be deemed just as unscientific, and in the end as costly, as the reckless rivalry in industrial enterprises. There must be co-operation and planning on national lines and international adjustment; and we agree with the author that there is no hope of any lengthy period of health unless we organise the economic life within each nation as units of an international framework.

We have perused with interest the author's able thesis. The dark places of our economic and political system have been probed by him with skill, and in doing so he has not indulged in carping at imaginary ills. Nor is there any vulgar abuse of any class or section of the community. His is a criticism, at once inspiring and humane, of the maladies such as he finds the world is suffering from. We have every confidence that the lines of action suggested by him will be given the consideration they eminently deserve.

In concluding this review, it is no disparagement to the author if we strike a somewhat jarring note. We are obliged to do so from a sense of responsibility. At page 19, the author says: "The Hindu civilisation is five thousand years old, one of the oldest on the earth. But it is as full of vitality and promise as ever, while the very powerful civilisation of the Assyrians was annihilated after about a century of supremacy." In referring to the two civilisations, the author has himself, unconsciously perhaps, suggested the answer. The passions which mock the Eternal can never be lasting. To us who believe in the sovereignty of the inner world of ideals, on which the entire scheme of social polity is founded, which is described by the simple word "Dharma," the bewildering conclusion of present-day life, which parades under the name of civilisation, must some day cease to be. These are the outward symptoms of

a cancerous growth within our own moral nature. Civilisations pass. The miseries which we see today seem like the convulsions of a dying age. The human mind, as Dr. Rabin-dranath Tagore has said, attains full status when it transcends geographical barriers. The utility of civilisation lies in its being able to share the good things of the world with all nations. And if the Hindu civilisation lives today, it is because it is based on the philosophy of internationalism. We have seen the triumph in human history of the law of natural selection prevalent in the biological world, the elbowing out of the less offensive by the aggressive pressure of a superior noxiousness. All human calculations have tended to be based upon the working of that law, till at last we find in the world today 'the man in us has made his final obeisance to the brute in us' as the poet has so well expressed. The present suffering in the world is not due to the lack of intellectual attainments or material advantage, both of which we have in a full and ever-increasing measure. India is not ashamed to own her great trust in Dharma and a balanced economic ordering of life based on spiritual values. We have to search for a formula for the present malady in the world and its cure. Individuals, communities and nations have far too long been following a path of expansion, the keynote of which is restlessness, cut-throat competition, mutual distrust and ceaseless strife. The antithesis of expansion is perfection,

which is nothing else than the ancient Hindu ideal of Dharma. The true value of expansion consists in the ordering of our economic, social or political life *within the limits imposed by Dharma*. It is

unfortunate that the gifted author has no faith in national reconstruction based on spiritual realities; the claim, in his opinion, is a wretchedly sophistical use of an ambiguous expression.

## AUSTERITY'S LURE

By S. N. Suta

E have a passion for attempting single strokes. What a grand thing it must be if we can gain each of our objects by the repetition of some simple act! It is true that such repetition may prove monotonous after a time. But the little dullness can certainly be more than balanced by the achievement to come. Take our philosophers. They want "that one thing by knowing which everything can be known." Our scientists too are of the same type. Like the philosophers, they may disagree in their theories and interpretations. But they are all one in directing their sense-organs, natural and acquired, bodily and instrumental, into the undercurrent of the world of phenomena to detect, capture and tame that one substance or force which has hitherto eluded control. With it yoked to the chariot of our desires, Kama Dhenu or Kalpa Taru, the "cow" or the "tree" which can instantaneously answer all needs, must become a reality. Seated at our table, we just press a button or administer a mild push or a pull. भीषादस्माद्भूतः पवते भीषोदेति सूर्यः भीषादमिच्छेन्द्रश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥ — Through fear of us puffs of wind start up; sun's rays split and shoot

forth; conflagrations spread; rain falls in showers; and death, the fifth, stalks over the land sweeping off those whom we do not want! Scripture then shall stand fulfilled, though in a scientifically altered and thoroughly modern sense! When such is the general tendency, is it any wonder that in religious practice also the single stroke and the single recipe lure the aspirant at almost every stage of his evolution?

If we read the mythologies of the world, we shall be surprised to see the variety of single strokes by which aspirants have tried to realise the Lord. Finding that man must act, some naturally developed a philosophy of action. Many of them branched into rituals, a few permutations and combinations of which persist to this day in practice, and many more undoubtedly in the spacious realms of supposition. Some thought that the Lord must be effulgent, and perhaps literally like a "thousand suns blazing in the heavens all at once" and endeavoured by mystic devices to get consumed in His glory. Seekers of this "gas light Brahman" have always suffered severe agonies when the inevitable contacts of the wide awake and

dream states reminded them of the prosaic affairs on earth. Some others worked on the hypothesis that the body with its coating of flesh was acting as an opaque obstacle to the full manifestation of the Lord's splendour, and proceeded systematically to make it thin and transparent through rigorous austerities. These and many others, although beginning with diverse half-true assumptions, succeeded in widening their outlook as their practice continued and experience grew, and therefore attained their life's goal. But those who would unduly stick up to their one-sided practices often came to grief and learned their lessons at a bitter cost. In proportion to their sincerity, however, their pains prolonged or subsided ; till at last when the horizon was sufficiently widened, Grace came down in showers and they too became illumined.

There was once a king of the Pandyas called Indradyumna. His fame soon spread throughout the southern lands and he came to be regarded as the foremost of the Dravidas. Vishnu was his chosen deity ; and as devotion developed in him, he determined to propitiate Him by a course of austerities<sup>1</sup>. Any line that military men take up, they usually can pursue with singular vigour and enthusiasm. Many an aspirant of this class has, as a result, achieved success in the field of religion more quickly than

aspirants of other classes. Dhruva, the royal boy of five, secured within a bare half year the blessings of the Lord which " Sananda and others of life-long celibacy, realised and attained to by means of meditation extending over many lives<sup>2</sup>." It is well known how easily prince Gautama could seat himself under the tree with the determination not to get up from there till illumination came. Search in other mythologies and other histories too ; the military man who sought God would be found to have sought Him with the full force of his sublimated fighting spirit. Indradyumna, like the true warrior that he was, cut himself away from royal associations with a speed and directness characteristic of the sword-cuts he used to deal his enemies in battle.

Since austerities required solitude, or at least could be better practised away from the haunts of men, Indradyumna selected a lonely spot on Mount Kulachala for his stay. The man of disciplined habits that he was, he adapted himself to the new surroundings with perfect ease. At fixed times he descended to the brook below for his ablutions and repaired to his small hermitage up above for the worship of Vishnu. He lived on the most meagre diet, wore matted hair, like any other aspirant of the forest regions and very often undertook a vow of

2. समाधिना नैकभवेन यत्पदं ।

विदुः सनन्दादय ऊर्ध्वरेतसः ॥

1. स वै पूर्वमभूद्राजा पाण्ड्यो द्रविडसत्तमः ।

इन्द्रयुञ्ज इति ख्यातो विष्णुव्रतपरायणः ॥

(viii, iv, 7)



silence in addition<sup>3</sup>. Even in that carefully selected, secluded corner human feet, although of other aspirants or of sages, might intrude upon his privacy and disturb the practices through which alone the Lord, he fancied, was going to be brought to him. Time did matter in such things; and he for one was not prepared to waste a moment further by any dealings with "others". Talk, he had found, was an introduction to a variety of relationships; and with his skill in strategy he quickly perceived the tactical advantage of effectively blocking that dangerous outlet.

But the Lord's ways are inscrutable. While Indradyumna had thus fortified himself and was sitting silent in his lonely corner, expecting Vishnu to bless him for his self-control, sage Agastya unexpectedly arrived there with crowds of his disciples<sup>4</sup>. The king was not absorbed in Samadhi at the time, but was able to understand what was happening around him. If his vow required that he should not open his mouth, it was yet possible for him to rise up from his seat, and, by gestures at least, request the worshipful guests to seat themselves and ease their tired

limbs. He should then have brought water himself, washed their feet and worshipped them with food and other articles available for a person who had a will to procure them. But this common courtesy he would not do. Royal pride, once in full swing, was surely no more dominating the king's mind. But it was there in a subtle form still. It had entered unobserved into his austerities and coloured his outlook. What he was attempting to secure, namely, the mental fitness for receiving the Lord's Grace, he could have got smoothly and in no time by *opening* his mind to the sage and his disciples now—and to others in due course, likewise—and doing to them what he had intended to do to the Lord. With Agastya's blessings and assurances he could have playfully dislodged the few enemies that were still entrenched within his mind. But he would not reason that way or budge an inch. He would rely on his own independent strength. *He knew* what to do.

To the trained eyes of Agastya, Indradyumna's mind was like an open book. He no doubt noticed the sincerity and the determination of the king, but he noticed also the foundation of pride on which the king was blindly erecting his edifice. Summoning a little extra energy, therefore, he raised his voice and hurled a few sharp words at that very foundation, which was thenceforth marked out for a speedy destruction. Said the sage, "This is an unrighteous wicked soul *with*

3. स एकदाऽऽराधनकाल आत्मवान्महीतमौनव्रत ईश्वरं हसिम् ।

जटाधरस्तापस आधुतोऽच्युतं समर्चयामास  
कुलाचलाश्रमः ॥ (viii, iv, 8)

4. यदृच्छया तत्र महायशा मुनिः समागमच्छिष्य-  
गणैः परिश्रितः ।

तं वीक्ष्य तूष्णीमकृतार्हणादिकं रहस्युपासीन-  
मृषिश्चुकोप ह ॥ (viii, iv, 9)

*no culture, who treats genuine knowers with contempt. He shall be steeped in blinding darkness; and he shall be turned into an elephant because he has a proud heart like that of an elephant\*."* With these words, Agastya turned round and left the place with his disciples.

It was not yet too late. Indradymna could have got up and, by gestures at least, prayed for forgiveness. But he retained his seat, not however with any spirit of defiance which uncontrolled pride and really low culture would have generated under the circumstances. Although Kshatriya blood still coursed through his veins, yet in this most trying, provoking situation he held in complete check all notions of vindicating himself. He was able, in addition, to install the form of the Lord lovingly in his heart and attribute to Him the blasting expressions of the angry sage. Devotion and austerity had so much toned down his passions that he could with unexampled self-mastery comment to himself, "This is the will of the Lord." (दिष्टं तदुपधारयन्) Such nobility and self-possession could not go in vain. But neither could the sage's pronouncement go to nought. The Unseen and Supreme Intelligence "saw" through it all and brought about a compromise in Its own inimitable

manner. Indradymna became the celebrated Gajendra, in obedience to what the sage had foretold; and retained not merely his permanent status of sovereignty in the elephant world as well, but also the capacity, whose steadiness was amply demonstrated, to install the Lord in his mind in all moments of crisis.\*

The rest of the beautiful story any one can look up in the Eighth Skandha of the Bhagavatam. Fallen under an equally powerful curse, one of the demigods was living out his period of imprisonment in a crocodile's form in a lake near by; and when the elephant king strode into it with his inborn air of dignity, followed by his retinue, the crocodile bit into his leg and began dragging him forcibly into the depths. In its own element the aquatic creature proved more than a match to the whole herd of elephants who could do their best on land alone. The tussle went on for a thousand years, and when Gajendra's pride had been slowly rubbed out of him, the net result of his austerities began to stream into his necessarily receptive mind. Reasoning, allowed only a restricted application in the Indradymna stage of his evolution, he now applied, first under pressure and then gradually with spontaneity, on a wider scale; and as a result was able to praise the Lord in His transcendental aspect as well as the aspect in which He was the cause of *all* phenomena. Gods

5. तस्मा इदं शपमदादसाधुर्यं दुरात्माऽकृतबुद्धि-  
रय ।

विप्रावमन्ता विगतां तमोऽन्धं यया गजस्त-  
ब्धमतिः स एव ॥

6. आपन्नः कौञ्जरीं योनिमात्मस्मृतिविनाशिनीम् ।  
हर्यर्चनाभुवावेन यद्गजत्वेऽप्यनुस्मृतिः ॥

like Indra did not approve of Gajendra's worship of the Formless, which appeared presumptuous in their eyes, and so refrained from interfering in his behalf. (एवं गजेन्द्रमुप-  
वक्षितनिविशेषः.....नैते.....उपसह्युः) But Vishnu who knew the depth of His devotee's sincerity and noticed also the widening of his mental horizon as Gajendra was wistfully glancing through the tearful eyes of his sinking elephant's frame, came speedily on His winged vehicle and gave him the freedom his mistaken austerity and subtle pride had so long delayed. His one-sided austerity and final meditation on the

Formless resulted, curiously enough, as the Bhagavatam says, in his "attaining to a *form* like that of the Lord Himself, clad in yellow silk and endowed with four arms." (प्राप्तो भगवतो रूपं पीतवासाश्चतुर्भुजः ॥)

Austerity is no doubt valuable, and persistence in it can ultimately lead to the goal. But let us not complain if, while pursuing such a narrow path, we are forced to weep through elephant's eyes, literally or figuratively, as a penalty for not revising betimes our disproportionate estimate of its place in the attainment of illumination.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Two Standpoints

WHAT are the signs of a spiritually eminent person? This has always been a difficult question to answer. Arjuna puts it to Sri Krishna and a fairly long section of the second chapter of the Gita is specially devoted to its answer. Other ancient books also deal with this topic since the picture of a perfect man helps the aspirant immensely in climbing up the spiritual ladder. To view him from a single angle is not entirely sufficient. In that case only a particular class of seekers will be benefited. For instance, if he is described as always calm, at most all those who are unduly active and restless may, if they like, try to regulate themselves according to that standard. Even there, the benefit is bound to be limited. For no one can arrive at the exact measurement of the requisite calmness. Often such single standards do more harm than good. For they give only partial views; and these hamper the growth of the aspirant till he is able to get a more complete view. To obviate

this difficulty the scriptures of the world have attempted to describe the perfect man from as many angles as possible. This too, unfortunately, has been a fruitful source of troubles. For philosophers have tried to squeeze all the items of description into single theories, each philosopher applying all his ingenuity to assign primary importance and secondary importance to the various items to suit the theory he wishes to maintain. Yet through all these conflicting theories we can find our way to accept two broad standpoints to make a fairly accurate study of the perfect man: What does *he* say he *feels*? And in what manner and with what results do *we* see him *acting*?

No two saints are very much alike in the work they turn out. A description of the activities of any one saint, therefore, will be useful to us only in so far as it helps us to understand the general principles characteristic of the outlook of the saintly *type*. We proceed to give below some extracts from a letter written by a critically minded

friend of ours after a recent visit he paid to Sri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai. We publish them, only with the idea of showing a manner of approach that may not be in keeping with any orthodox single theory but yet covers both the standpoints mentioned above, and may be taken as a fairly reliable guide in such matters. If every aspirant can frame suitable tests after an intelligent study of these remarks, he may be able to spot out and avoid many an obstacle that might otherwise bar the road to his own further progress. The critic writes :

### A Rare Type

" The Maharshi impressed me as a rare type of man. I do not know whether he is a Jnani, or what he is. For, as the Vedanta says, a Jnani can be known only by a Jnani; and I am certainly not one. But this person, any one can feel, is not of the ordinary run of men. We nowadays come across men everywhere whose one thought is world reform and things of that kind. But here is a man who is *perfectly aware*, as one can see from his conduct and movements, who has absolutely no such idea, who has in his opinion nothing to add to the sum-total of human happiness himself. He simply seems to exist, without waiting for anything, without being anxious about anything. On watching him I was powerfully reminded of the Gita passage beginning with Uddasinavad, " Like one that is unconcerned " etc. He seems to take, as far as I see, no interest even in the Ashrama that has sprung up around him. He simply sits there ; things are going on *as events and other men shape them*. The only activity of the Ashrama in which he seems to take active interest is cooking. He cuts vegetables in the kitchen ; and if

there is any special cooking any day he is sure to try his hand at preparing some of the dishes for that day. Spicing and other processes of the culinary art are performed there under his directions."

### The Silence of Advaita

" Another point that struck me is his silence. We used to ask in fun among ourselves why eminent professors who crossed the seas did not deliver their Vedantic lectures through silence. But here is a person who actually does this as far as his teaching of the Vedanta is concerned. When I asked him to tell me something of spirituality, the first thing he said was that silence was the highest teaching ! The beauty of the man is that he remains faithful to this idea to the utmost extent possible. His idea is that *the Advaitin has no position to state, no Siddhanta to propound*. He regrets that in these days even Advaita has become a Siddhanta, whereas it is really not meant to be so. The reason for the existence of so much Vedantic literature is this : When doubts arise in the mind, as our intellect is quickened, such literature is helpful in dispelling them. In other words, the Advaitin speaks only to dispel a doubt that might have arisen in himself or in another. Our saint remains faithful to this idea. He is mostly silent and speaks but a little if questioned on any point. Of course he jokes and speaks occasionally on other things, but he has no dogmatic teaching on Vedanta to deliver. He told me he says 'yes' 'yes' to every one who interprets Advaita, even to some of his followers who interpret his ideas in the books published under his name. When I asked regarding a book that I purchased in the depot there, how far the ideas stated therein are his teachings, he told me

that it is very difficult to say that, as he had no definite teaching. As people have understood, they have written, and they may be right from certain points of view. He himself, he said, has absolutely no idea or inclination to write a book; but due to the entreaties of some of the people about him he has written some verses, and he told me that he is often troubled by men who take a fancy to translate them into this language and that, and ask him about the faithfulness of the translation." (He writes and speaks in many languages.)

There may be many who believe that the Maharshi is really working miracles through his apparent silence and inactivity. They may look upon the springing up of the Ashrama with its publication and other departments as the manifestation in the material plane—of course slowly begun—of the enormous "power" his silence has been projecting into the unseen plane of the causes of all phenomena. They are free to hold such beliefs if thereby they get for a time any substantial help in their spiritual struggles. But nothing can possibly be gained by introducing mystery at every step. In our opinion, the critic is right in refusing to bring in mystery and in giving the belief of the saint himself regarding silence. The Advaitin, according to the Maharshi, "speaks" *only to remove a doubt arising in his own mind or in that of another*. And quite consistently with his theory this saint does give help to those who really want it. But, can silence *by itself* help another in any plane? We think it cannot; it can only be the interpretation which other people give to the *thoughts and mood* of the silent man that can exert any beneficial influence on their character. "The saint is blessing me;

henceforth I shall succeed in controlling myself," "This holy person seems to be telling me that I should pray regularly hereafter"—thoughts like these, springing up as a result of approaching any silent sage, can undoubtedly act as powerful incentives for leading a controlled life. Whether the saint himself is "sending out" such thoughts, is an altogether different point. In any case, *mere* silence, apart from the positive thoughts of the person who adopts it as a vow, or of those who come into contact with it, cannot act as a spiritually helping force. Our critic continues :

### **Dumb Eloquence Does Satisfy**

"So mostly, the Maharshi remains silent; and people come, make prostrations, sit before him for some minutes or hours and then go away, perhaps without exchanging even a single word! I have got my own doubts as to whether people benefit by this teaching through silence. But yet people come from long distances to hear this dumb eloquence, and go back *satisfied*."

After all, one does not go to a temple to hear the image talk! Neither is the silence of the image responsible for the worshipper's *satisfaction*! The difficulty comes in only when silence *by itself* is regarded as a virtue par excellence, and is declared capable of bestowing spiritual benefit upon another. But to go back to the letter :

### **No Inertness**

"Though he speaks but little, it is very instructive to watch his face and eyes. There is nothing very prepossessing about his personality, but there is a beam of intelligence and unruffled calmness in his eyes, that are unique. His body is almost motionless except when he occasionally changes his position or wipes his sweat in that hot place. I was carefully observing his face ;

*I found him seldom winking and never yawning. I say this to show that I am sufficiently satisfied that the absence of activity in him is not due to inertness."*

Those who attempt meditation would do well to remember these observations. There are some who wish to sit long and cherish the secret hope that the patience involved in such sitting or some other unknown virtue connected with it will somehow, some day, give them the capacity to master their mind. But let them remember that if they find such sitting punctuated by yawning now and then, it would be far more wise to get up and be *physically active*, and thus discontinue what would otherwise be nothing short of a systematic practice of semi-sleep.

### **Sweet and Friendly**

"The third point that struck me," writes our friend, "was the absolute absence of vanity and self-importance in him. Except for his toilette confined only to a *Kaupinam* (loin cloth), a visitor may not find it possible to make out Ramana Maharshi. He eats the same food as every one else there; there is not even a single extra item or special dish for him. I specially noted that in conversation he is not averse to using the first personal pronoun, unlike some other Vedantists who use "he" and things of that kind. I point out this to show how unostentatious he is. His silence, I am convinced, is not to assume a gravity of disposition calculated to keep people at a distance. And when he breaks that silence, as he does when questioned, he appears to be the *sweetest and most friendly of men.*"

Many an aspirant, unfortunately, fails to progress owing to the "gravity complex" or owing to the false notion that sweetness is the

result of effeminate softness and indicates want of manly strength!

### **Same-sightedness**

"He makes no distinction between man and man for their wealth or position in society. I saw peasants and gentlemen in motor cars coming and being greeted with the same silence. They all sit on the floor and receive the same hospitality. In fact, the Maharshi seems to be quite indifferent to any financial gain that the Ashrama may have by special treatment given to rich men."

"I stayed in the Ashrama for three days. The Maharshi talked with me very kindly and quite freely on several questions I asked him. Although his manner of replying is not so impressive as I expected, his *thoughts are always clear, concise and free from all ideas of narrowness.* Though he has not read much, as he himself told me in some context, he has a good grasp of all the difficult points in Vedanta. My impression in short is this: Whether he is a Jnani or anything else I do not positively know. But I am convinced that he is a sweet and lovable person who is indifferent to all things about him, who has no end of his own to gain, who is always alert even when he seems to be most deeply absorbed, and who may be said to be perfectly free from greed and vanity. In seeing him, I do believe I have seen a unique personage."

### **Range of Activity as We See**

Shall we not add to this description that he is at the same time a person whom *we see acting* ungrudgingly as a cook, as a poet, as a philosopher and as a guide, exerting a *uniform pressure* of encouragement upon "his followers" and "others," upon the rich as well as the poor, who have come to look upon his residence as a place of pilgrimage?



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXII

JULY, 1934

[No. 3]

## HINDU ETHICS



रागो द्वेषस्तथा मोहो हर्षः शोकोऽभिमानिता ।  
कामः क्रोधश्च दर्पश्च तन्द्रा चालस्यमेव च ॥  
इच्छा द्वेषस्तथा तापः परवृद्धुपतापिता ।  
अज्ञानमेतन्निर्दिष्टं पापानाञ्चैव याः क्रियाः ॥  
उभावेतौ समफलौ समदोषौ च भारत ।  
अज्ञानश्चातिलोभश्चाप्येक जानीहि पार्थिव ॥  
मूलं लोभस्य मोहो वै कालात्मगतिरेव च ।  
छिन्ने भिन्ने तथा लोभे कारणं काल एव च ॥

Attachment, hate, loss of judgment, joy, sorrow, vanity, lust, wrath, pride, procrastination, idleness, desire, aversion, jealousy, envy and all other sinful acts are together known by the common name of ignorance. These two, ignorance and covetousness, know, O King, are the same in substance. Both are productive of the same fruits and the same faults, O Bharata.

The root of covetousness is loss of judgment. Loss of judgment, again, is its inseparable attribute. Eternity is ignorance's course. The time for the appearance of ignorance is when the objects of covetousness are not won.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLIX, 6, 7, 9 and 11)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*The Attitude of the Guru manifested in the Master from the very Childhood*

THE manifestation of the attitude of the Guru is noticed in the Master from his very childhood. Nevertheless this attitude, it must be admitted, reached its fullest maturity only in the adult age, after his attaining the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This statement of ours regarding the early manifestation of the teacher aspect in the life of the Master should not lead one to think that we are indulging in exaggerations with a view to enhancing the glory of our Master. A truly impartial study of his life will prove beyond doubt the baselessness of imputations of this nature. Scrutinize, however much we may, the incidents of this superhuman life, in order to pick flaws therein, we are sure to find our intellect entirely baffled in the end, and ourselves lost in wonder and admiration. Our own minds, too, were not less suspicious in any way. Rather, nobody will perhaps nowadays even think of going as far as we did in order to correctly appraise the Master's greatness. Times without number, many of us proceeded to test him, with a suspicious heart, but were finally put to shame and compelled to admit utter defeat. With regard to this we have already given a few

hints. Many more will come later. After going through them all, our readers may form their own opinions. Therefore it is needless to dilate on this point any further.

*Fruits First; then Flowers: This is what happens in the Lives of All Divine Incarnations.*

'Fruits first; then flowers'—is a dictum, the Master was always wont to use with reference to the lives of the eternally free divine incarnations. The meaning is this: Whatever practices such great souls undergo are carried on merely with a view to demonstrating, before the common run of men, along which line one must strive to attain a particular result. For, an inquiry into their lives shows how they appear to make enormous efforts to attain perfect knowledge although from the very birth their behaviour at all times and in all respects is exactly as it ought to have been if they had already possessed such knowledge. They have made the result of this knowledge their own even before their birth, as it were. When such is the case even with the eternally free souls, how much more so it must be regarding divine incarnations! Manifestation of perfect knowledge is seen in their lives from the very start. The scriptures contain statements showing the universal applicability of this truth to all incarnations in all ages and



climes. Moreover many points of similarity are to be found in the behaviour of divine incarnations of different ages. For example, the act of transmitting spiritual energy through touch is found equally in the lives of Jesus Christ, Sri Chaitanya and Sri Ramakrishna. Similarly, the birth of such incarnations being immediately known in some extraordinary way by some particular devout souls; the Guru aspect manifesting in them from their very childhood; their being conscious, from the very early days, of the fact that out of mercy they have incarnated on earth to uplift humanity by showing them special paths of progress; and things of like nature are perceived as common to them all. Hence there is nothing surprising in the manifestation of the Guru aspect in the Master from his very early days. Because, divine incarnations form a distinct class by themselves. It will be a serious blunder if we think that merely because such extraordinary events are not possible in the lives of average men, they must be equally impossible in the lives of divine incarnations too.

*The First Manifestation of the Guru Aspect in the Master's Life at Kamarpukur. Theological Discussions in an Assembly of Pundits.*

We meet with a glowing manifestation of the Guru-aspect for the first time in the Master's life at Kamarpukur, his native village. It was after his investiture with the sacred thread—a rite obligatory on

the grown-up boys of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas to make them competent to study the Vedas. He was then nine or ten years of age. In connection with a post-funeral ceremony all the renowned Pundits of the locality were invited to the house of the Lahas, the Zemindars of that village. Hot debate ensued among the Pundits, as was natural in a large gathering of this type. When a particular theological problem could not be solved inspite of prolonged discussions, the boy Ramakrishna, or Gadadhar, as he was then called, told one of the Pundits with whom he was more or less familiar, "Cannot the problem be solved in this way?" Many were the boys that were drawn from the village to the spot, through curiosity; but unable to make out anything of the verbal fight of the Pundits with their loud voice and thousand and one gestures, some of them took it to be a sort of fun, and began to laugh; some felt disgusted and began to create a lot of confusion by mimicking the Pundits; and some others were engaged in play with perfect unconcern regarding what was going on there. Therefore, Gadadhar's acquaintance was at first taken by surprise to find that, unlike others of his age, this wonderful boy had patiently listened to all the discussions, understood their meanings, pondered over them and finally arrived at an appropriate conclusion. However, he placed the solution of Gadadhar before the other Pundits. Finally all of them

unanimously accepted the solution as the only one possible and began to inquire as to who was the person whose keen intellect made the discovery for the first time. Their wonder knew no bounds when they came to know for certain that the unique person was none other than the boy, Gadadhar. Overwhelmed with surprise, some kept on staring at him, considering him to be possessed of divine powers. Others, filled with joy, took the boy up in their arms and began to shower their blessings on him.

#### *A Parallel Incident in the Life of Jesus Christ*

It is necessary to discuss this point a little further. We come across a parallel incident in the life of Jesus Christ, the originator of the Christian faith. He was ten years of age when his parents Joseph and Mary took him along with them on their journey from their native village, Nazareth, in Galilee to the holy land of Jerusalem in order to visit, and worship in, the famous temple there. This place of pilgrimage for the Jews was just like the holy places of the Hindus. Devout souls would consider themselves fortunate in feeling the presence of God here in a gold casket and worship Him with offerings of incense, fruits and flowers, and sacrificial birds and animals, at an altar in front of the casket. A similar custom of sacrificing pigeons and other birds is still in vogue among Hindus in such holy places as Kamakhya, Vindhya-vasini, etc.

#### *Pilgrimage of the Jews in those days*

After having accomplished their visit, and made offerings and sacrifices in accordance with the scriptures, Joseph and Mary began the return journey with their fellow-pilgrims. In those days the circumstances associated with this pilgrimage to Jerusalem from different quarters were much the same as those experienced by Indian pilgrims visiting on foot holy places like Puri, etc., before the advent of railroads. There were the same long roads with trees, wells, tanks and inns at various places on their sides; rest-houses (way-side houses built by pious men for the free use of pilgrims) too, we hear, were not at all scarce; the same class of guides accompanying the pilgrims; the same grocers' shops where rice, pulses, flour and other necessary foodstuffs could be purchased; the same clouds of dust; the same army of mosquitoes, friendly to the pilgrims inasmuch as they would scare away sleep and lethargy that make one forgetful of God; the same practice of the pilgrims of each place travelling in one group as a safeguard against the raids of highway men; and lastly, the same attitude of devotion and dependence on God on the part of the pilgrims.

#### *Jesus's Exposition of the Scriptures in the Temple*

When the parents of Jesus started on their return journey along with their own party, they did not find their boy near by and thought he was coming behind with other boys

of the same group. But they were very much perturbed when they could not see the boy even after covering a considerable distance. They began to search among the whole group thoroughly only to find that Jesus was not with them. Seized with anxiety they hurried back to Jerusalem and inquired in many places; but no clue of the boy was found. At last they went inside the temple itself to see if he was there, and to their great surprise, found him seated in the midst of learned Rabbis, engaged in scriptural discussions with them and astonishing every one of the audience with his unique exposition of most complicated problems, which baffled even the renowned scholars present there!

*A Reply to Prof. Maxmuller's Criticism*

Because of the striking similarity of this incident with the one men-

tioned above in connection with the early life of the Master, Prof. Maxmuller has expressed great doubt regarding its authenticity. Not this alone. He went so far as to remark somewhat sarcastically that with the set purpose of enhancing the glory of their Master, the English-knowing disciples of Sri Ramakrishna had foisted this event into his life. Undoubtedly, this judgment bears witness to the keenness of the learned professor's intellect. But nevertheless, we cannot help mentioning this fact in as much as we have heard of it from many old men of Kamarpukur, the Master's birth-place, and on several occasions the Master himself recounted it before some of us. However we think it desirable to rest content with this much about the controversy.

## BEHIND ANGELIC FORMS AND THE FORMLESS

**I**F a person meditates regularly for a fairly long period of time, is he not bound to develop higher states of awareness? Or are there chances of his getting stuck up anywhere or even side-tracked, in spite of such regularity? If so, what are they and what are the precautions to be taken, and what the wrong notions to be eliminated?

**Apparently a Question of Time only**

From one standpoint it looks as though the regular meditator has gone beyond the region of con-

founding lanes and cross-roads and entered upon the one straight path that leads to his cherished goal and nowhere else. The main difficulty in the initial stages is for the aspirant to keep up his interest in the practice. His mind will try to cheat him in a variety of ways; it will bring forward a hundred excuses calculated to make him first postpone, and then in due course stop altogether, the new irksome attempts at meditation. It may suggest to him perhaps that the day is too hot for comfortable practice,

or that there is a slight cold which the usual sitting would only aggravate, or that a friend is expected to come a couple of hours later and that every available minute should be spent in arranging for his stay, even if it comes to stopping a day's practice, which after all leads only to "selfish" gain! The aspirant who can detect such dodgings of the mind, overcome them with a sense of good humour and carry on his practice in conformity with his original programme, has certainly acquired a measure of vigilance and will power which must pave the way for his success. When such regularity has been attained, he has therefore apparently nothing to fear, nothing to worry about, nothing to guard against. Being on the right track, he has simply to continue his practice. Even if the pace is slow, he must surely approach the goal in proportion to the number of days he has practised, nay, to the number of hours he has sat : तत्सर्वं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥ "He that is perfected in Yoga finds it in the Self *in due season*" (Gita, iv, 38).

### **Vigilance, not Paralysing Fear**

In reality, however, the region of lanes and cross-roads extends much farther ahead than is ordinarily imagined. It would be wiser for most of us to proceed rather on the assumption that to the very last day of our life we shall remain liable to go off the right track, and what is worse, fail to notice our deviation till we stray shamefully, and sometimes dangerously, far.

Such an attitude, it may be objected, will result in generating a host of fears in our otherwise free and balanced mind and in unnecessarily diverting our energy into a futile search for an enemy who exists nowhere. This objection can be easily got over if we remember that this attitude is adopted only as a precaution, and that the vigilance brought into play by it is quite different from the kind of fear that paralyses healthy activity. We cannot reasonably posit fear and paralysis where a person actually gains an insight into the causes of failure. It is on the other hand the function and privilege of a sharpened intelligence to see the unfavourable factors in any situation quite as much as it does the favourable; and part of the measures which it devises for achieving success must contain effective steps to neutralise the forces which tend to bring about failure. Far from begetting and rearing up fear, such remedial measures only help to sharpen the intelligence still further. On the contrary, by remaining blind to the dangers really awaiting him, no one has ever managed to enhance his courage and wisdom to any appreciable extent. Vigilance and the capacity to take adequate precautions must, therefore, form part of the normal mental equipment of every religious aspirant.

### **Laziness in a Subtler Form**

Their need is particularly great when meditative exercises are being practised. To sit long and without a single day's break is no doubt good,

for inertia of one kind is overcome by such determined effort. But the same inertia can assume subtler disguises and possess the mind un-awares. For after the first few days of regular practice the aspirant usually begins to feel a sense of triumph and security; and this is likely to make him take away the defences he had wisely set up at the start. The relaxation that follows has nothing in common with the absence of tension or the feeling of "release" and "let go" experienced when the aspirant has harmonised his personality and is gliding into the Fullness beyond. Immature relaxation should be promptly detected and replaced by activity. For the sense of rest which accompanies it, although pleasant, is really the outcome of a subtle and therefore dangerous type of mental laziness.

### **Symbols of Unsatisfied Desires**

If the aspirant is careless, this standstill of the mind occurs invariably in his daily practice as well, after the enthusiasm and freshness of the first few minutes is spent up in a fruitless attempt to stop his internal cinema show. The stage that follows is one of semi-sleep, which would in the normal course develop into full sleep, were it not for the sitting posture the aspirant endeavours to maintain till he is satisfied his hour is struck. An exercise of this kind does not possess even ordinary sleep value; what need then to speak of meditation value? It is this semi-sleep that under certain conditions establishes connection with the plane of unsatisfied desires and

shows up wonderful, brilliant scenes of angels descending, bestowing boons, entrusting world-messages and the like. It is quite natural for the dreamer to mistake these for genuine visions. For they present the widest possible, and most refreshing, contrast to the shaky and flitting mental pictures which are usually realised to be "distractions" and hotly chased out in the earlier stages of the day's practice. What really happens is that pictures are coming before him throughout his sitting. Against some of these he does struggle manfully for a time; and that is of course solid work turned out, though to him it appears a relative failure. Then comes mental languor and an unconscious sheathing of his weapons of offence with it, with the consequence that the deeper layers of the mind emerge unobstructed with their welcome contributions of angelic donors and their long-looked for donations. As a matter of fact, these too are "distractions" as much as the earlier figures. But no resistance being offered to their drama, they get a relative permanence and splendour which, from the standpoint of the pleasure-seeking and ease-loving elements of the personality, happen to be conveniently dignified by the title "visions."

### **Even Learned Men Deluded**

It is sad to see how people who have the requisite capacity to fence with skill and hold their own in many a field of wide awake mental life and of physical activity, get

slowly caught up in the fond imaginings of this so-called meditation and lose their practical ability in proportion to their entanglement in the symbolic figures of their repressed desires. Men with a brilliant record at the university, with a firm grounding in the different systems of philosophy, men who could give beautiful expositions on the wide awake, dream and deep sleep states,—even they, failing to educate their minds regarding this deceptive, half-awake stage of languor, come to attach more and more significance to these deluding symbols, invest them with the rank and power of genuine “visions” and as a result, unconsciously and helplessly take a downward curve not only in their meditative effort, but in their general mental and physical activities as well. It is true some angelic voices may seem to instruct some aspirant to do some positive things now and then ; but his confidence and ability will undergo tangible development only to the extent that he puts forth the necessary energy and carries them out to perfection. More often, however, the sinking of the mental level, itself the result of overpowering laziness, brings up only symbols of *shirking*, only pictures asking him to be *passive* and to *avoid* situations and yet graciously *promising* him *all the satisfaction* which sincere struggle and eventual conquest alone merit. Persistence in this kind of Sadhana must lead to a dreamy state of existence, a state which bears some sort of

external resemblance to genuine devotion with its calmness and trust in the Divine, but is in reality one of intense hankering for the satisfaction of various desires, *minus* first the willingness, and in due course the courage and the capacity, to undergo any sustained mental and physical exertion. As days pass by, aspirants of this class feel more and more keenly the wide gap between “grim reality” and their own inner world of angels and boons, till at last they either experience a nervous breakdown and become forthwith a subject of research for doctors, or haply get into the company of those who can diagnose their case aright and guide them once again to the straight road from which they strayed during their regular practice of semi-sleep.

### Preparation through Wider Interests

All those who sit with closed eyes, then, are not meditating. Meditation, properly speaking, comes when the aspirant is considerably advanced in his practices and can with ease make his mind flow in any given direction without the least break, as if it were oil being poured from one vessel into another. No one can get such mastery all on a sudden; and the books dealing with practical steps in mind control lay down an elaborate course of discipline to be gone through before an aspirant becomes fit to take it up. Says Patanjali after giving a detailed description of Yama, Niyama, Asana and Prana-

yama: ततः क्षीयते प्रकाशावरणम् ॥ धारणासु च योग्यता मनसः ॥ "As a result of these practices is destroyed the covering to the full functioning of awareness; and the mind becomes fit for concentration." What is this covering which has to be removed? It is Karma, i.e., the results of thoughts and actions awaiting fulfilment, in short, the myriad desires, a few of which only are recognised and admitted by the conscious mind, that struggle for satisfaction and silently manufacture the films which are unrolled according to an unknown order of precedence before the mental eye the moment the physical eye is closed in so-called meditation. Until their claims are heard and adequate settlements made with them through conquest, persuasion or neutralisation, they are certain to work behind the scenes and project on to the screen of the meditating mind innumerable symbolic pictures that will sorely tax the aspirant's patience and perseverance. How to deal with them is a vast subject and comprises the whole of Yoga. Here we shall state simply that they can be eliminated or sublimated, not by practising any type of *passivity* but only by the *expulsive force of deliberately cultivated superior, wider interests*.

### The Lure of the Formless

The trouble with many aspirants is that they know too many scraps and too little correlation. They know, for example, that there are two stages of meditation, one with form as its basis and the other with form

outside its focus. But instead of understanding that the former has to be mastered scientifically before the mind can be made subtle enough for the second, they take them to be two different alternatives, one of which only need and can be taken, like the optional groups prescribed for university degrees. If then a choice has to be made, argues the profit-seeking mind, let us choose that which is superior, and of course less exacting! Here again we come upon the little seed which later on develops into the wonderful tree of laziness with its manifold branches and poisonous fruits.

### Example of Arjuna

This type of erroneous distinction and conception of the superiority of one path over another is not the special feature of the mentality of the modern seeker alone. A sample of it we discover in the opening verse of the twelfth chapter of the Gita where Arjuna asks, "Of the two types, namely those devotees who, ever harmonised, worship Thee in Manifested Form, and those who worship the Indestructible and Unmanifest, which is *the more learned in Yoga?*" The motive that prompts the question is quite patent: he, Arjuna, the Lord's bosom friend, should belong to the superior set if there is one; else it would not be in keeping with the intimacy enjoyed, and known by others to be enjoyed, by him! But the Lord has not forgotten how his bosom friend, just a minute ago, was unable to stand the sight of the slightly magnified, glorious Univer-

sal Form which was shown him in a gracious mood in answer to his special request for a practical confirmation of the teachings given. Said this would-be aspirant after the Formless, gazing at It, quaking all the while and in stammering accents, "My heart faileth me for fear. Show me, Lord, Thy familiar Form again, armed with mace and discus, and with the daidem on Thy head"! The terrible aspects of this All-inclusive Form frightened even such a perfectly trained fighting personality like Arjuna. Curiously enough, his was an inside that could retain its balance only if it got the satisfaction of seeing Krishna's Form, sitting with him on his bed, jesting with him at meals and playing with him calling him by his pet names. No wonder that the Lord's comforting reply laid the fitting stress upon the worship of the Manifested Form, referring to the votaries of the Unmanifest in the simple yet significant terms that "they also reach Me only."

### **Wherein Superiority Lies**

Spiritual path is one that must lead the aspirant steadily to the Lord. Superiority of one path over another can consist only in its being able to provide greater opportunities for the aspirant's self-expression and for a harmonisation of his personality, without subjecting him to unnecessary conflicts and violent departures. There cannot be any superiority in the sense that the followers of one path would mingle with the Lord to a greater extent and enjoy correspondingly greater

Illumination on that account, than those who rejected it in favour of other paths. Each path worth the name tackles the problem of personality and awareness in a particular order and leads up to complete synthesis and "release." A graded sequence appears among the various paths only when a particular aspirant with a particular un-harmonised personality and dammed condition of awareness has to be diagnosed and given a prescription which will raise the level of his vitality and which, while ultimately effecting a thorough cure of his maladies, will at the same time give him immediate relief from his most distressing symptoms in the order of their intensity and painfulness. The criterion is: Which path removes which symptoms first, during the process of a complete cure? It is never: Which path offers better relief irrespective of the symptoms present before treatment and tolerated after it is supposed to be over? In the latter case it is not a cure but a mere patchwork, which may no doubt have some utility if it helps the patient to go about his daily duties without much inconvenience. Expansion and liberation of awareness, however, can never be attained by any kind of patchwork.

### **Depends on General Level of Life**

Looked at from this standpoint, we see that an aspirant is already on the wrong track when he becomes eager to establish an order of precedence among the various paths first, so that he can after-



wards confidently fit himself into that one which seems most honourable, irrespective of the strong and weak points present in his existing mental make-up. It is profitless for him to settle beforehand whether God is with form or without form and whether meditation with form or without form will more accurately hit His Reality. It is more reasonable to commence repairing his instrument of perception and removing the stiffness and friction among its different parts, so that he can with the lightest effort focus it at will and catch the reflection of what Reality there is. The Gita has not told that meditation on the Unmanifest or the Formless is *more creditable* than that on the Manifest; it has told only that it is *more difficult* to accomplish. The reason is not far to seek. Most aspirants, like Arjuna, live in a plane of forms. They yearn to see, touch, hear, and make merry in a world of desirable forms. Terrible

forms repel them, frighten them and unnerve them completely. And an experience like the Universal Form, where forms are only magnified to include those at a distance in space as well as time, pleasant as well as unpleasant, just as a preparatory step to the All-inclusive Formless, suffocates them and brings them to the very verge of a thorough breakdown. And yet such people imagine that they ought to take up *Formless* meditation, that being superior Sadhana in their eyes and themselves being ear-marked for superiority in every field of activity! Life, however, is one complete whole; and it cannot be cut up into compartments retaining contradictory attributes for long. Lovers of form in a thousand items that constitute life can never breathe freely and thrive by clinging to the Formless in meditation alone, which after all constitutes but one single item, and that by no means the main one, to the beginner in spiritual life.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

Kartik 1321, Bengal Era.

I went to see the Holy Mother in the evening. I had been residing at our Baghbazar house at that time and I visited her almost every day. Finding her alone I narrated to her a dream incident and said, "Mother, one night I saw Sri Ramakrishna in a dream. You had been living then at Jayrambati. I saluted him and asked, 'Where is the Mother?' He said, 'Follow that

lane and you will find a thatched cottage. She is seated in the front porch.'" The Holy Mother was in her bed. With great enthusiasm she sat up and said, "You are quite right. Your dream is true." "Is it, then, true?" I said in surprise. "I had the idea that your home at Jayrambati is a brick dwelling. But in the dream I saw the earthen floor, thatched roof, etc., and there-

fore concluded that it was all illusory."

In course of the conversation regarding austerity for the realisation of God, she said, "Golap-Ma and Yogin-Ma devoted a great deal of their time to meditation and the repetition of God's name. Yogin-Ma practised the greatest austerity. At one time she lived only on milk and fruits. Even now she spends much of her time in spiritual practices. The mind of Golap-Ma is hardly affected by external things. She does not even hesitate to eat cooked vegetables purchased from the market, which a Hindu Brahmin widow can never touch."

It was arranged that there would be some devotional songs about the Goddess Kali that evening, at the house of the Holy Mother. The monks of the Belur Math would take part in it. The music commenced at half-past eight in the evening. Many of the women devotees went to the verandah to hear the song. I was rubbing oil on her feet and could hear the songs from the room. I had heard those songs many a time before. But that day those songs, from the mouths of the devotees, appeared quite new. They were full of power and thrill. My eyes became moist. They were singing, now and then, those songs which Sri Ramakrishna had himself sung. At such times the Holy Mother would cry out with enthusiasm, "Yes, Sri Ramakrishna would sing this song!" They commenced the song whose first line ran thus: "The bee of my

mind has become fascinated with the blue lotus of the Divine Mother's feet!" The Holy Mother could not lie down any more. A few tear drops trickled down her cheeks. She said, "Come, darling, Let us go to the verandah." After the singing was over, I saluted the Mother and returned home.

\* \* \*

2nd Jyeshtha 1325 B. E.

The Holy Mother had returned to Calcutta from her country home. Her body was emaciated by protracted suffering from malaria. I did not go to her for a long time as I thought it would be proper to visit her when she was a little better, and as I knew that visitors were not allowed to see her on account of her illness. But I soon learnt that women devotees were allowed to see her. So one day I went to Baghbazar and found her lying in bed in the room adjacent to the chapel. Her body was pale and weak. No sooner did she see me than she exclaimed, "Come in, my child. You were so long in coming to see me!"

*Devotee:* Yes, Mother. I would have come before this, but I heard that the monks did not like our coming here on account of your illness. Therefore I did not come. I was extremely restless to see you. And you, too, perhaps forgot all about us in your country home. You have so many children everywhere.

*Mother:* No, my child, I did not forget any one. I always remembered you.

*Devotee* : We are almost half-dead in our anxiety about your illness. How are you now ?

*Mother* : I am much better now. Look at my hands and feet. The skin has dried up and peeled off.

I noticed her words were true. I brought her a new piece of cloth. As soon as she saw it, she said, "That is fine. It is a nice cloth. I have only a few pieces with me. I was not here during the Durgapuja. Your sister-in-law was here the other day. How are they ?

How is your brother managing his affairs now ? Has he secured a job ? Look at this wretched war ! When will it come to an end ? People have been suffering from want of food and clothing. What is the cause of this war, my child ?" I narrated to her the origin of the Great War as I had gathered it from the newspaper reports. I hesitated to talk much lest it should aggravate her illness. I stayed for a little while and then took leave of her.

## BUDDHA AND SANKARACHARYA

*By Swami Ranganathananda*

**I**F the present generation looks upon Buddha as the greatest teacher and exemplar of morality, it looks upon Sankara as the boldest thinker and one of the profoundest philosophers any nation can be proud of having produced. The brilliance of his intellect and the sublimity of his philosophy are the wonders of the modern age. Like Sri Krishna and Buddha, he occupies a prominent place in the galaxy of Indian national heroes. His lasting contribution to the thought of the world is his system of Vedanta philosophy.

Until quite recently Sankara's real place among India's immortals has been underestimated and very often misunderstood. He is generally represented as a leader of a sect of Brahmins and of a certain order of Sannyasins. Some latter-day Puranas, imbued with sectarian prejudice, represented Sankara as

an incarnation, though of Siva Himself, yet seeking to lead men astray by teaching the delusive doctrine of Mayavada. The harm that has been, and is still being, done by such intentional or unintentional misrepresentations of the great men of our nation is incalculable. As with Buddha so with Sankara, the important cause for such misrepresentation was the decline of independent thought and judgment. Individuals, however great, are not accidents in a nation's career. They are the products of a changing and growing culture. The sectarian and the traditional view has done the greatest harm in looking upon them as mere individuals. The newly-developing historical or evolutionary view is seeking to correct many an old mistake. In this new perspective Sankara's per-

sonality, like that of Buddha, emerges in a new light.

It is generally accepted that Sankara was a great philosopher and dialectician. But many do not know that he was also a great organiser working for national unity in India. It is unfortunate that Indian history was never, until quite recently, and even now is not, very effectively taught from a cultural point of view, as the evolution of the mind of a living race, but from a political point of view, as a story of the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires. That India has got a real history and that it can and must be viewed from a "national" point of view has been vigorously proclaimed by Swami Vivekananda in an article written by him entitled "The Historical Evolution of India." Therein he discovers the thread and sets forth the real theme of our history as the unfoldment of an ancient culture and presents before our vision leaders of culture as heroes of the nation. And one such hero who led a great cultural movement, whose effect is working even today, is Sankara. "National union in India must always be the union of her scattered spiritual and cultural forces" says Swami Vivekananda. And in these days, when India is struggling to build up a nation out of her apparently incompatible elements, such as language, religion, culture and race, it is both interesting and instructive to know what attempts Sankara made in his time to achieve this national unity. Perhaps his efforts

and teachings may be of some guidance for us today.

When we look back to the times when Sankara was born, we find a state of disintegration and disunion which can be compared only to the anarchy and confusion that obtained in this country at the close of the eighteenth century. Politically, the country was broken up into a congeries of petty states each warring against the others, devoid of any national ties between them. King Harsha's empire had broken up and in Northern India the Rajputs were struggling for ascendancy. Buddhism was fast declining and in its wake innumerable sects sprang up with all kinds of debasing customs and crude practices. The pure religion of the Upanishads as well as of Buddha was forgotten. Various tribes and races with different degrees of culture and refinement had come and settled in India in the wake of the political confusion. What India required at that time was a strong rallying point for her cultural and religious forces. Indian culture must become dynamic and Indian society must become elastic in order to assimilate the various elements in a synthetic unity. The Upanishadic philosophy had to be restated and society had to be reorganised. This was the work which awaited the brilliance of a genius and India discovered such a genius in Sankara.

The first step in this direction was a restatement of India's ancient philosophy. With this end in view Sankara preached the Vedanta

philosophy. He popularised the Gita by writing one of the most beautiful commentaries on it and placed it before the Indian peoples as a book of practical philosophy. He took over the crude practices of the various sects and purified them as far as he could, instituted new modes of worship and brought them all under the spiritual hegemony of the Vedanta. He destroyed the virus of sectarian quarrel by composing thrilling devotional Stotras in praise of almost all the gods and goddesses of the time. Himself soaring above all sects and creeds and religions in virtue of his philosophy, he yet encouraged sects and religions through which the highest philosophy reached the common people. For this he deservedly bears the title of '*Shan-matha-sthapanacharya*.' Vaishnavism or Saivism, Mother-worship or the worship of the Formless Brahman—all these found a place in his catholic heart. But at the basis of it all was his philosophy whose motto was the inclusion of everything and the rejection of nothing. At the same time he preached against animal sacrifices and the degenerate practices of the Tantriks and provided a simple and attractive religion of love and devotion for the masses. The next step was the Aryanisation of the various tribes and races which had settled in India in the wake of the political confusion. Many were absorbed into the main body of the Hindus and given appropriate status in the social scheme.

Sankara was the first to conceive of a geographical unity of the whole

of India. He established four Mutts in the four corners of India for the effective propagation of his ideas and placed learned Sannyasins in charge of them. He himself travelled from one part of the country to the other, from south to north and east to west and made himself acquainted with various aspects of Indian culture. It evokes our wonder and admiration today how in those days a man could achieve so much in so short a time. It only shows what burning motives actuated him and what an active life he led. In this he was only exemplifying his own philosophy which teaches the ideal of self-effacement and active service for the good of others—*सर्वभूतहिते रतः* ॥

Today we are able to see and appreciate the immensity of his services for the cause of India and Hinduism. That Hinduism could survive the onslaughts of the Musalman invasions was due in great part to the success of his mission as well as to that of many other reformers who came after him. Indian culture bears the ineffaceable marks of his genius.

Today we are faced with a new situation. Our problems are complex and are puzzling even great minds. India in modern times has become the meeting-place of most of the races, cultures and religions of the world and any mere communal or even national solution of her problems has become impossible. They have to be solved on international grounds only. And in the midst of the strife and confusion that are rampant both in India and

outside, the voice of Sankara is coming to us in whispers, inaudible to the many but caught by the discerning few—the truth of the Supreme Oneness of all Existence. This is the perennial message of the Vedanta philosophy that, in reality, we are all *one*. This whisper has to gather force and reverberate through the length and breadth of the land, nay, of the whole world,—this is the only panacea for the world's disease. The lion of Vedanta must roar. And the greatest medium through which this Vedanta roared in recent times was Swami Vivekananda, the paragon of Vedantists. Says he in his lecture on "The Mission of the Vedanta" delivered at Madura: "The other great idea that the world wants from us today, the thinking part of Europe, nay, the whole world—more, perhaps, the lower classes than the higher, more the masses than the cultured, more the ignorant than the educated, more the weak than the strong—is that eternal grand idea of the spiritual Oneness of the whole universe..... There is but One Soul throughout the universe, all is but One Existence. This great idea of the real and basic solidarity of the whole universe has frightened many, even in this country; it even now finds sometimes more opponents than adherents; I tell you, nevertheless, that it is the one great life-giving idea which the world wants from us today, and which the mute masses of India

want for their uplifting, for none can regenerate this land of ours without the practical application and effective operation of this ideal of the oneness of things..... This oneness is the rationale of all ethics, and all spirituality."

Thus Buddha and Sankara are the two fairest flowers which historical India offers to an admiring yet critical world. In spite of various vicissitudes in their mutual relationships we are compelled to discern a supreme point of contact between them. What the world wants today is the brilliant intellect of Sankara to realise the supreme Oneness of all Existence and the all-inclusive heart of Buddha to embrace the whole existence in a sweeping effort of compassion and love. In India itself the solution of the most knotty national and social problems depends entirely on this one condition. Vedanta must become practical. The signs of the times point unmistakably to the fact that India has rediscovered the messages of Buddha and Sankara to her own salvation. And the world outside, owing to the changed outlook brought about by scientific knowledge, has begun to feel an attraction towards Indian thought, particularly the Vedanta philosophy. Thus it has begun to catch the spirit of Buddha and Sankara; and if the world looks up to India today it is because she has produced a Buddha and a Sankara.

## ANANDA-BRAHMA VADA—III

*By Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M.A.*

*(Continued from previous issue)*

### **Rational Plane and Brahman's Self-Revelation as Universal Reason**

The conception of Supreme Mind as Brahman was not accepted as final by the sage, Varuna, and Bhrigu had to devote himself to a still higher course of self-discipline and meditation for complete purification of his reason. His reason at last emancipated itself from the imperfections and limitations, which rendered it unfit to be a perfect mirror of the exact character of the Absolute Reality. In the Mental Plane, its own unrealised ideals were imposed upon the Reality, which was therefore conceived as progressively realising its ideals in and through the temporal world process. The universe appeared to be actually far short of what it ideally ought to be; it was found to be not thoroughly rational and moral, not perfectly true and beautiful, not fully good and blissful. The Reality was therefore a thinking and willing evolutionary principle, or a self-conscious and self-determining personality deliberately acting for the purpose of attaining some ulterior end. Brahman, so conceived, is obviously not perfect and infinite, but seeking perfection and infinity through a process. But when the knowing subject ascended to the

Rational Plane and reason became complete rational in its outlook, without any barrier between itself and its objects, when reason had not to borrow its materials of knowledge from the experiences of the imperfect organs and arrive at an indirect acquaintance with the Reality by an imperfect inferential process, it discovered that what it conceived to be the ideal constituted the essential character of the Reality,—that Truth, Beauty and Goodness, instead of being the ideal to be realised by a laborious world process, were the eternally realised characteristics of the Absolute Brahman. Brahman, the ground and substance of the universe, was a perfectly rational Being, was eternally true, good and beautiful, and manifested Himself in all His glory in the apparently pluralistic objective universe.

Reason in this plane transcends the differences of good and evil, beauty and deformity, the ideal and the actual, the end and the means. What ought not to be cannot have any real existence in a rational world, and what ought to be is always good and beautiful, is always enjoyable and blissful. The whole universe thus reveals itself as the self-expression of an actually self-existent, self-conscious, self-fulfilled and self-

enjoying Being, of an all-good, perfectly beautiful, absolutely blissful Spirit; and this Supreme Spirit, this absolutely perfect Being is Brahman. All orders of relative realities that are experienced in the lower planes of Knowledge, all kinds of phenomena,—physical, biological, mental, moral and spiritual, are the self-manifestations of Brahman, and there can be no irrational, immoral or inaesthetic element anywhere from this rational point of view. Brahman is all, and all is Brahman.

In the Mental Plane, the subject is characterised by three distinct kinds of functions, *viz.*, cognition, emotion and volition. It is divided within itself and does not realise its essential unitary character. Consequently, it apprehends the different aspects of Reality as really distinct from one another, and cannot form any definite conception of their unity, for which it has an inherent demand and which is therefore vaguely thought of as an ideal to be progressively realised. In the Rational Plane, the subject attains its own unity. Cognition, emotion and volition are merged together and unified in one undivided spiritual consciousness. Consequently, the Absolute Reality or Brahman reveals Himself to it as one Universal Reason, in whose character Truth, Beauty and Goodness—perfect Existence, perfect Self-consciousness and perfect Self-fulfilment—are essentially one and indistinguishable. As there is perfect unification of subjective consciousness, so there is perfect unification of objective

Reality. In this plane, Brahman is the universe, and the universe is Brahman. The subject, as pure spiritual consciousness, finds reflected upon itself one undivided universal consciousness which, alone and without a second, is the Absolute Reality, Brahman. He is the beginning, the middle and the end, the all in all, of existence.

### **Plane of Ananda and Brahman's Perfect Self-revelation as Ananda**

This conception of Universal Reason as Brahman also falls short of Varuna's highest conception of the Absolute Reality, and he encourages his son to go on with the quest. Bhrigu has arrived at the stage from which he has to rise only one step higher. He has found out that Pure Rationality, in which truth, beauty and goodness are united, constitutes the essential character of Brahman. This character has been revealed to him, when his own reason has become pure and transparent. His reason in this pure state, as the subject, experiences the Universal Reason as its object. The subject and the object are wholly akin to each other, they are of the same stuff, there is nothing to differentiate the one from the other except that the one experiences as the subject and the other is experienced as the object. This pre-supposes the absolute unity of the two. It implies that Brahman, the Absolute Reality, is in His ultimate character above the subject and the object, the experiencer and the experienced. In the Rational



Plane, Brahman divides Himself, as it were, into the perfect subject and the perfect object in intimate relation,—almost a relation of identification—with each other. A sort of duality and relativity appears in this plane, but above this plane there must be a kind of supra-rational experience, in which there is no distinction between the subjective aspect and the objective aspect of the Absolute, but nevertheless there is the perfect realisation and enjoyment of His infinite differenceless Self. Herein there is the fulfilment of Knowledge in its identity with Truth, the fulfilment of Will in its identity with Goodness, the fulfilment of Love in its identity with Beauty. In this supra-rational state of existence, the Universal Reason is characterised by the effortless, processless, changeless enjoyment of His own absolute perfection. The subjective reason, having merged itself completely in the Universal Reason, participates in this eternal supra-rational experience, this characteristic self-enjoyment, of the Absolute. This state of perfect self-enjoyment is indicated by the category of *Ananda* or Bliss.

Bhrigu, having attained this plane of experience, comes to the conclusion that *Ananda* is the highest and the most comprehensive category by which the essential character of Brahman can be defined. All other categories imply partial aspects of the connotation of this all-comprehending and all-transcending category. The conception of *Ananda* involves that of self-consciousness,

and along with that, it involves the idea of self-enjoyment. Existence is implied by it as a matter of course. It necessarily implies the absence of all limitation, for every limitation would mean negation of *Ananda*. Thus infinity, eternity and perfection are involved in the nature of Absolute *Ananda*. There can be no desire unfulfilled, no good unrealised, no truth unmanifested, no beauty unenjoyed in the nature of this Reality, for any such element would put *Ananda* in the realm of the ideal and would make its present real character imperfect. Hence the highest truth is that Brahman or the Absolute Reality is perfect *Ananda*.

In addition to its revealing the one subject-object-less infinite, eternal, self-existent, self-conscious and self-fulfilled character of Brahman, this category of *Ananda* also unveils the mystery of the ultimate ground and reason and necessity for the self-manifestation of such a self-complete, self-perfect, self-enjoying Being, in diverse planes of relative and partial experience, as different orders of phenomenal realities, in which His essential character is concealed and distorted. The relations of the phenomenal universe to the noumenal Absolute and the innermost principle of creation are beautifully pointed out by this conception of *Ananda* as constituting the essential nature of Brahman. This point, however, there is no room to elucidate in the present article.

When the truth-seeking soul of Bhrigu arrived at this conception

and communicated it to his father and preceptor Varuna, the latter was perfectly satisfied and accepted it as the Ultimate Truth. This

doctrine is known in the Upanishad as *Bhargavi-Varuni Vidya* after the names of the father and the son.

(Concluded)

## TRISHODADHI OR THE STORY OF A TAPASWI'S FALL \*

By Kaundinya

ONCE upon a time there was a Brahmin named Trishodadhi who was by hereditary descent the minister of a king named Ruru, a spoilt child. Being betrayed by his queen in his youth, he fell into a violent hatred of all women that exhibited itself in the form of love! Wishing to wreak his vengeance on the whole sex for the crime of one, he began like a mad bee, roving from flower, making love to every woman in the world that took his fancy and then throwing her away as soon as won, taking all possible pains to obtain the love of each, only to flout her the moment it was his. He was dreaded by the husbands and fathers of his kingdom, and above all by his minister Trishodadhi, who had a wife much younger than himself, and recently married, named Watsatari. Trishodadhi's natural jealousy which was extreme, was accentuated by her extraordinary beauty and his own age. He feared all men in the world; above all he feared the king, and passed his life perpetually trembling lest Ruru should set eyes on her; and he kept her very scrupulously hidden like a priceless

pearl from all eyes save his own. And though he doted on her, yet against his will he was obliged to leave her much alone; for all the burden of the state was left on his shoulders by the king, who utterly neglected all affairs, intent on nothing but pursuing his amours. And being thus pre-occupied, Trishodadhi had only his intervals of leisure for his wife. And all the while that he was not near her, he was everlastingly tormented by his jealousy and fear. And in order to place her as far as possible beyond the reach of any danger, he kept her in a residence that resembled a fortress and shut her in a garden surrounded by a lofty wall. And he never went to see her without quivering with anxiety lest he should discover on arriving that what he was always fearing had actually come to pass. And so in fact it did. For one day, returning from his duties, long before he was accustomed to do, as if destiny had determined to fulfil his apprehensions, when he entered the garden where his wife was in the habit of wandering for her diversion, he looked and saw her in the company of the king!

\* Based on F. W. Bain's translation from the original Sanskrit.

So, when he saw it, Trishodadhi stood for a single instant silent, gazing at that pair with eyes that were suddenly filled to the brim, first with amazement and then with anguish, and next with anger and finally with ice. And then he turned away slowly telling to himself, "Miserable wretches, what, after all, is the use of astonishment or pity for myself or even wrath for you! It is not you that are to blame, obeying as you do the incorrigible instincts of your sex and your depravity, and rewarding with ingratitude one who has loaded both of you with benefits. It is rather I myself who am to blame for putting any faith whatever in this treacherous and unsubstantial world, filled to the very brim with lovers and women, snakes and tigers and betrayers and betrayed, on which I will this very instant turn my back for ever."

And as he said, so he did. Leaving his wife, his office and his home, he turned his steps without losing a single instant to the wilderness of the Vindhya hills. He said to himself with tears in his eyes, "Ha! What was the Creator about in creating such a world as this where evil-doers prosper and virtue comes to nought, and fidelity and service and devotion gain nothing in reward but villainous ingratitude and bitter disappointment?" All at once rage rushed into his soul against the very constitution of the world, as if *that* rather than himself was the author of his misery. He exclaimed, "Did not

Viswamitra acquire power by penance and asceticism? Did not he prove by his own example that nothing is impossible for perfect asceticism? Aye, my resolution is fixed. I will begin this moment and heap up for myself a very mountain of merit till its towering mass shall overbalance and obliterate the united forces of the inhabitants of heaven!" And going to the farthest recesses of the forest he discovered in its heart a lonely spot and dwelt there as motionless as a tree. Night and day, year after year, he continued lost in contemplation, living all the while, mainly on air like a serpent, and his own undaunted resolution.

Years passed and one day it happened that Matali, after roaming the earth, arrived at the court of Indra and said, "O Pākāri, what are you all about? Are you asleep or have you abandoned all care whether of your own pre-eminence or the established order of the world? Far away, on earth below, there is an old Brahmin in the forest of the Vindhya hills, who, by his interminable Tapas, is accumulating so gigantic a heap of merit that it threatens destruction to the three worlds; and unless something is done very speedily to stop him, this merit of his, beyond a doubt, will disturb the equilibrium of the universe and wreck the established order of the worlds, and hurl you from your throne." Indra was so upset by what he heard that he himself went down to the earth and tried various devices to tempt the

Brahmin to desist from his penance. But finding all his efforts were in vain, Indra returned sorely mortified and ordered the heavenly nymphs, Menaka, Rambha, Tilottama and others to go to the earth and shake the resolution of the old Brahmin by exhibiting their charms. They also returned, having failed to achieve their object.

Finally Indra and the gods took counsel together and in utter despair went to Kalānidhi, one of the daughters of the Daitya, Aparapaksha. Kalānidhi gazed at them sleepily in wonder and murmured softly to herself, "What in the world can the gods want so badly as to bring them here all together in a body? Something must surely have gone amiss in heaven and beyond a doubt sore indeed must be the need that drives them hither." She then politely rose and listened in silence while Indra told her the whole story. And when he ended she said, "For centuries have we lived here in the bottom of the sea, my father, my sisters and myself; and yet not one of the gods ever visited us before. What honour for a daughter of the Daityas! But what could be the service of such a poor thing as me where even the heavenly maidens have failed? But as thou hast sought me and seekest my help, I will go and try my skill, such as it is. Yes, I will go this instant just to show that I can be of some use even when all the nymphs of heaven have failed. Come, now, Lord Indra. We will go together, for I shall need thee to assist me."

In the meantime, Trishodadhi continued his Tapas, and thought the mountain of his merit was everyday growing so much that even Meru would soon begin to shudder for his own pre-eminence! He said to himself, "I shall very soon have amassed sufficient stock of merit to enable me to commence operations against the citadel of heaven, whose inhabitants are now beginning to get alarmed at my Tapas. Did not Indra himself come here in person and endeavour unsuccessfully to turn me from my purpose by offering me every kind of bribe and did not heavenly maidens come one by one on a similar errand? O, let them come, even all together. They shall find my determination a rock against which the sea of feminine cajolery shall hurl itself in vain!" As he spoke thus, he raised his head, and cast a glance around him, and as he did so, he started and exclaimed within himself, "Ah! just as I anticipated! There is, as it seems, yet another of these snares in the form of a woman. I will not even look at her; and very soon, growing weary of her vain endeavour to attract my notice and distract my concentration, she will give it up and go back to her employers in disgust."

In the meanwhile, Kalānidhi—for she it was—approached him and began to examine him closely. She said to herself, "Fool, he is flattering to himself beforehand on his power of self-control and already triumphing at the prospect of my ignominious defeat. But he will

find himself very much mistaken. He has already become aware of my presence, and as his attitude shows, he is nerving himself for opposition and resistance, expecting me to assault him point blank like all those very silly nymphs by attitudinising and practising other such tricks of coquetry before him. No, I will take care to irritate and excite his *curiosity* by doing all behind his back, so that he will not be able to see anything at all except by turning round. And he shall be attacked, not as he anticipates, but by that very avenue along which he least looks for danger, and one which for all that, is weakest and least guarded—his *ears*. For sight can be assaulted only by what is present, but the ears are a passage by which I shall steal, like a snake, into the *past* and pierce his very heart." Kalānidhi then assumed the form of a Pippala tree, and stationed herself behind him.

The day wore on in this wise and in the stillness of the moonlit night the old Brahmin heard at a distance among the forest trees, the noise of breaking branches and the crashing of twigs and leaves. He listened and said to himself, "Some large animal is forcing, as it seems, a way through the denseness of the woods and coming gradually near." As he waited, he saw entering from out of the cluster of trees a tall royal elephant, who came towards him and passed him, not minding him at all, but went wandering about here and there in the moonlight as if he were looking for something he

could not find. And all at once he stopped as if he had found the object of his search and addressing the Pippala tree, spoke aloud in a human voice, "O Pippala, art thou at last the Pippala I am looking for, or only a common tree?" And as Trishodadhi heard him, stupor came upon him, as he said to himself in amazement, "Ha! What is this wonder that an elephant should speak with an intelligible voice, and that I should understand him! Ha! I understand the language of the beasts. Now beyond doubt this is the fruit of the tree of my asceticism!" And his heart swelled with vanity and triumph at the thought of his own forthcoming perfection. And as he listened eagerly for more, there came out of the Pippala tree a soft voice and it said, "Oh! King of elephants! And art thou then the elephant appointed to meet me?" The elephant exclaimed, "Oh! Long-expected Pippala! Can it be that I have found thee? Then listen while I tell thee my story and end it, and so at last free myself from the curse and the hateful body of an elephant in which I have been imprisoned so long." Said the Pippala in reply, "Oh elephant, thy voice is very loud. Dost thou not see that old ascetic sitting plunged in meditation? Know that I love him; for year by year have I watched him sitting by me as he grew almost as motionless as myself. And I will not have his contemplation disturbed. Come round me, therefore, to my other

side and let my trunk conceal thee and screen thy harsh voice; and do thou speak very low." And the elephant obeyed doing as the Pippala said. But Trishodadhi said to himself, "Out upon this Pippala and her affection for myself!" And yet he strained his ears to catch, if possible, their talk, utterly forgetting himself!

(*To be concluded*)

## LATER INDIAN METAPHYSICS

*By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.*

In the course of the later development of Indian metaphysics we see a stressing of the aspect of Bhakti (devotion) but not the formulation of any new great spiritual ideas. It may also be mentioned that after the impact of Islam on India, not only was Islam profoundly influenced by the higher Hindu metaphysics, but there was also a considerable influence exercised on Hindu metaphysics by Islamic thought. The religious movements headed by Kabir and Nanak show such influence of Islam, which was never very strong in metaphysics but contributed the great ideas of unity of God and brotherhood of man and stressed the value of alms-giving and prayer. The main body of the doctrines of these movements, however, is undoubtedly Hindu to the core. Nanak affirmed the unity of the Highest. He says: "Know that there are two ways, (*i. e.*, of Hindus and of Mussalmans) but only One Lord." The Sikh view is that the soul is an immortal essence emanating from the Absolute. The goal is the reabsorption of the soul in the Fountain of Light. Kabir was a disciple of Ramananda and he realised the

unity of the doctrines of the Bhakti cult and of Sufism.

The impact of Christianity, which too was never very strong in metaphysics but contributed the great ideas of unity of God, brotherhood of man and redemption from sin, and emphasised the value of philanthropy and social service, brought about the Brahma Samaj movements inaugurated by Ram Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore and Keshab Chunder Sen. These movements were aimed at the caste system, at the doctrine of incarnation and at image worship and ceremonialism, and did not take their stand on any new metaphysic. They affirmed the unity of Godhead and inculcated the efficacy of faith, prayer and love. But after Keshab Chunder Sen came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa he introduced a change in his Brahmoism. That change was known as the Nava Vidhan (New Dispensation). It was really a re-Hinduising of the movement. The concept of the Motherhood of God came in by the open door of the New Dispensation. The only Christian religious feature which still exists is the congre-

gational worship. The Brahma Samaj movement did not give birth to any great ideas in the realm of metaphysics.

The Arya Samaj was another protestant movement. It also was aimed at the caste system and at image worship. But instead of diluting Hinduism by Christianity it took its stand on the Rig Veda alone. It has also not made any notable contribution to metaphysics.

The Theosophical Society has tried to combine all religions and combine such combination with science and spiritualism. It is not necessary to go into its tenets and influence here as we are concerned only with Indian metaphysics and it has made no noteworthy contribution to metaphysics.

It is in the Ramakrishna movement that we find again a new forward flow of Indian metaphysics. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa realised the truth of all religions; he realised the Motherhood of God; and he realised that religion was a matter of deep inner spiritual experience. His greatest disciple, the famous Swami Vivekananda, broadcasted his master's ideas in the East and in the West. Sri Ramakrishna says :

"Pure knowledge and Pure Love are one and the same."

"When all personality is effaced, then one realises the knowledge of the Absolute in Samadhi."

"The realisation of God is of two kinds: the one is of the unification of the Jivatman and the Paramatman; and the other is to see Him in His Personal Manifestation. The former is called Jnanam and the latter Bhakti."

"The same Being whom the Vedantists call Brahman is called Atman by the Yogins and Bhagavan by the Bhaktas."

"God is formless and God is possessed of form too. And He is also that which transcends both form and formlessness. He alone knows what all He is."

"God the Absolute and the Personal are one and the same."

"He is the Absolute and again He is the Lila (Sport). This Lila is of four kinds—Iswara Lila, Deva Lila, Jagat Lila and Nara Lila."

"It is the sign of knowledge that when it dawns full on a man, he becomes silent. Then the salt-doll of 'I' melts away into the ocean, becoming one with it. There remains not even the lightest consciousness of separateness."

Thus here again we hear, after all, the sweet and synthetic note of the Bhagavad Gita.

In the next issue we propose to make a brief review of Indian Metaphysics as it stands today.

## THE IDEAL OF SIVA

*By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T.*

**T**HAT the great Governor of the universe is a Being devoid of qualities and limiting adjuncts is the lesson that philosophy teaches us. But yet from the very dawn of creation the human mind has been taking a supreme delight in endowing the Absolute with a name and a form and with a personal aspect. Man's mind, being utterly unable to fathom the mysteries of the Infinite or to gaze on the splendour of Its brilliance or to comprehend at one step the nature of the All-pervading, longs to look at that Being beyond the realm of expression through the comforting veil of personality and to throw over it a covering of time and space and limitation just to be able to experience a little of the bliss of contact with It. The Unconditioned Being has therefore been conceived of as a Superhuman Individual with pleasant characteristics, easy of approach and responsive to prayers. These conceptions of the Personal God are varied, and are grotesque or significant or mystic or poetical according to the culture and the needs and aspirations of the conceiving minds. But yet even as a person looking at the wide sky through a window perceives the sky still, though but a small portion of it, so too are these Personal Forms but 'windows unto

the Ultimate Being.' They too are true, though not the entire truth.

Siva, the God of the Saivites and the Goal of the Saivite philosophy, is one such personalised aspect of the Supreme Being. It may justly be said that the conception of Siva has been one of the most remarkable achievements of the Hindu mind. The Siva of Saivism is not one of the hierarchy of divinities, not even one of the Hindu Trinity (Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Rudra or Siva, the Destroyer), but the Highest, Omnipresent, All-powerful, Omniscient Being, free, blissful and immanent in the wide universe. It is necessary to lay emphasis on this point of Siva being a Transcendent Being, because the 'popular' conception of Siva often is that He is the chief and most powerful Being amidst a multiplicity of gods; and not infrequently do we find ignorant folk ranging themselves on the side of Siva or of Vishnu, and preparing, with the help of illustrations from the Puranas, to establish the superiority of the one or the other. Siva is the infinite and eternal God, inclusive of Brahma and Vishnu and the three-hundred and thirty million other gods. He is not a tribal chieftain or a disputant for divine supremacy, but the inner soul of all things.



The Ultimate Being is neither masculine nor feminine, nor neutral, and the minds that conceived the Personality of Siva have thought of Him also as purely masculine, as half-masculine and half-feminine (the form of *Ardhanari*) and as neutral (the form of the *Lingam*).

Siva has a unique grandeur and sublimity. He is portrayed as dwelling at the Mount Kailasa on the summits of the snow-clad Himalayas. The sun, the moon and fire function as His three eyes. The Ganges and the crescent give beauty to His matted locks of hair. His ears are ornamented with queer earrings. His whole body is besmeared with holy ashes. He has four hands. He wears the holy thread and garlands of bones and human skulls. He is clad in a coarse tiger-skin. His throat is blue with the poison which He tried to swallow in order to save the world, but which stuck to His throat because His Consort would not allow it to pass lower down. Venomous snakes coil round His person. In His hands He carries weird musical instruments. The Bull, His vehicle, attends on Him. He is always immersed in contemplation, perceiving His own Self. He loves to dwell in burial and cremation grounds. The ghosts are His army, and the demons His guards. Occasionally to the accompaniment of the drum and the resonant sound of His anklet, He dances the great dance of death and destruction. He is the Lord of Terror and Disaster, of Chaos and Deluge. And yet what

a benevolent aspect He possesses! He is also the Lord of Mercy and of Grace. And His chief Consort is the Goddess Uma Haimavati, the embodiment of all power and learning, the great Mother of the worlds, who by Her extraordinary love has become part and parcel of Her Lord's person. It is this Siva that is the God of the ascetics. He is the master-yogin, the Guru of Gurus, whose very silence is eloquent and effective teaching. He is the noblest, the most sublime and the loftiest of all the manifestations of the Supreme Being. He is the home of all blessedness. He is the great deliverer of mankind from the meshes of illusion. He is the conqueror of death and of passion, of Yama and of Kama. He is India's national God also. As Swami Vivekananda says, the God that India worships is the great ascetic of ascetics, the all-renouncing Sankara, the Lord of Uma. Renunciation and service are the twin ideals of India, and Siva is the embodiment of both. The lord of wealth and prosperity, He has shunned all pleasures and chosen to lead the most rigorous of lives. He is ever solicitous of the welfare of His devotees.

Siva has been adored in no less than twenty-five different forms. He has been portrayed as the Wandering Beggar, as the Eternal Bridegroom, as the Mighty Hero, as the Devourer of Poison, as the enjoyer of unruffled peace, as the Silent Teacher who bestows wisdom on all, and in many other aspects.

But one of the most brilliant conceptions of this Great God is peculiar to the Saivite faith and is teeming with spiritual and philosophical symbolism. It is the conception of Siva as the Eternal Dancer, Nataraja. In every temple of Siva may be found the image of Nataraja; but it is in Chidambaram that the worship of Nataraja has reached its climax. Foremost among the Saivite shrines of South India is Chidambaram known also as the Kailas of the South. It was here that the untouchable saint Nandanar attained unsurpassable glory. No Saivite considers his life well-lived if he has not at least once visited Chidambaram and feasted his eyes with the glorious vision of the God who dances there. It has been visited by unnumbered saints and sages, and is naturally surcharged with spiritual suggestions, the very atmosphere of the place breathing the loftiest philosophical ideas. Saivites give to Chidambaram a psychic importance. Philosophy has proved that the macrocosm is only the microcosm on a vast scale. Every feature in the microcosm must therefore have its counterpart in the macrocosm. Adepts in psychic control say that there are two nerve currents in man's spinal column, called Pingala and Ida, and a hollow canal called Sushumna running through the spinal cord. Of these the Sushumna is inactive in ordinary men, and when it begins to act, the man is on his way to liberation. Saivites say that Ceylon in the south is the Ida

in the macrocosm and that the Himalayas in the north are akin to the Pingala, while Chidambaram is the holy Sushumna on earth's body. Siva on Mount Kailas is believed to be dancing in sheer ecstasy of self-realisation, and to please His devotees He is also rehearsing eternally the same dance in Chidambaram, the queen among Saivite shrines. The word Chidambaram means the world of consciousness. In every man the Lord is seated in the innermost cavity of the heart, and the small region that is thus rendered luminous by the Divine presence is called Chidakasa or the plane of knowledge and illumination. Chidambaram is the physical external manifestation of that holy plane where the Lord ever shines. The form of Nataraja, the Ruler of Chidambaram, is a form of grace, taintless, bondageless, devoid of conditioning attributes. The formless God has confined Himself in a form just to provide an easy Ideal for the devotees to meditate on. Nataraja signifies in His form the five kinds of work that the Lord does, viz., creation, protection, destruction, causing delusion and bestowal of grace; and at the same time by dancing in the Chidakasa or knowledge sphere He signifies His transcendental aspect also. In one of His hands He carries a tiny drum; this drum signifies His work of creation. For, creation means the projection into the plane of name and form; and every created thing must have a

corresponding word to denote it ; in the beginning is the Word, and the Word is at first a part of God, and God is adored as Nāda Brahman (the Lord as sound). The drum thus stands for the production of sound which is the primary aspect of creation. With another of His hands Nataraja assures His devotees of protection from the contaminating influences of worldly life. In a third Hand He carries fire, the symbol of wholesale destruction. One of His legs is placed on a monster slain by Him, and that monster is the demon of ignorance. The other leg is uplifted and is suggestive of liberation and grace.

Again, Nataraja's form is also symbolic of the great Saivite *mantra* 'Namasivaya' consisting of five vowel sounds. His feet are suggestive of the first sound *Na*, in His stomach is located *Ma*, in His shoulder *Si*, in His face *Va*, and in His head *Ya*. His form in entirety is indicative of the basic symbol of all articulation, the Pranava, Aum. The object of Nataraja's dance is the enlightenment of man. The conception of Nataraja is indeed an achievement of mature philosophers who have compressed into one form a whole world of spiritual symbology.

Chidambaram is famous in another way too. Saivite philosophers say that in five shrines in South India the Lord Siva has manifested Himself in the form of the five elements in the universe, viz, earth, water, fire, air and Akasa. Chidambaram represents Siva's manifestation as Akasa, the first

creation of God. And to the right of the image of Nataraja in Chidambaram is the well-known *sanctum sanctorum* (*Chidambara Rāhasyam*) where the Lord is adored as the Pure Akasa of Consciousness. It may also be mentioned here that Kālahasti, Tiruvannāmalai, Jambukesvaram near Trichinopoly, and Conjeevaram are reputed to be respectively the seats of Siva's manifestation as air, fire and light, water, and earth.

In His neutral aspect Siva is worshipped as the Lingam, and Saivites believe that the adoration of the Lingam will lead to final beatitude. The explanation of the Lingam as the phallic emblem, which is often indulged in by thoughtless critics, is too ridiculous to need refutation. Swami Vivekananda has shown that the worship of the Siva Lingam originated from the adoration paid to the Yupa Stambha or sacrificial post by the ancient Aryans. The sacrificial post was regarded as representative of the eternal Brahman. Swami Vivekananda has also pointed out that the very conception of Siva was an evolution of the idea about sacrifices. The sacrificial fire, its smoke, ashes and flames, the Soma plant, and the ox used for carrying sacrificial wood gave place to the conceptions of Siva's bright body, His matted hair, blue throat, and of the ox as His vehicle. The Lingam therefore is the symbol of the God beyond all attributes. Other conceptions of Siva have at least represented Him as a Being *with form*. But the cylindrical

roundedness of the Lingam is symbolic of the Immutable Infinite Existence. Hence it is that the worship of the Lingam is a common feature in all Saivite temples. For taking the Lord Siva in a procession or honouring Him in other ways, the temples keep a separate metallic idol in human or superhuman form; but the central deity of the temple is always the Lingam whose depths no one can fathom.

Such indeed are the manifold glories of the Ideal of Siva. And it is this Siva Who is with form and without form at the same time and is personal as well as impersonal, Whom the sages have in mind when, sitting far away from human haunts amidst the immensity of Nature's solitude, and attuned to the inner life, they chant to themselves in half-audible voices *Sivo'ham! Sivo'-ham!*

## SONG OF THE SANNYASIN

*By Swami Vivekananda*

[सन्यासि-गीतिका\*]

(1)

Wake up the note ! the song that had  
its birth  
Far off, where worldly taint could  
never reach—  
In mountain caves, and glades of  
forest deep ;  
Whose calm no sigh for lust or  
wealth or fame  
Could ever dare to break; where  
rolled the stream  
Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that  
follows both.  
Sing high that note, Sannyasin  
bold ! say  
“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

गीतं गाय सुतुङ्गतानसहितं दृगत्सुदुर्गत्यितं  
संसारोद्भवदोषलेशग्रहितश्चेताद्रिगर्भोद्भवम् ।  
उत्पन्नं च वनस्थलेऽतिगहने,—तद्वयेव दोष्वन्यताम् ।  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीग्भावभरितः मृद्रीय उद्धोध्य-  
ताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

शान्तिर्यस्य कदापि वै धनयशःक्रामिनं संभियते ।  
यस्मिंश्चापि सुमुक्तिदा प्रवहति ज्ञानस्य गंगा सदा ।  
सत्यानन्दविधारिणी भगवती,—तत्रोत्थितं गीय-  
ताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीग्भावभरितः मृद्रीय उद्धो-  
ध्यताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

† दोष्वन्यताम् = पुनः पुनः ध्वन्यताम् ।

\* [Translated in Ardulavikridita metre by Srimat Swami Nityananda Bharati Shastri, Vcdacharya of Uttarakasi.]

(2)

Strike off thy fetters! Bonds that  
bind thee down,  
Of shining gold or darker, baser  
ore;  
Love, hate—good, bad—and all the  
dual throng.  
Know slave is slave, caressed or  
whipped, not free;  
For fetters, though of gold, are not  
less strong to bind;  
Then, off with them, Sannyasin  
bold! say  
“Om Tat Sat Om”!

(3)

Let darkness go! The will-o'-  
the-wisp that leads  
With blinking light to pile more  
gloom on gloom—  
This thirst for life, for ever quench;  
it drags  
From birth to death, and death to  
birth, the soul.  
He conquers all who conquers self.  
Know this  
And never yield, Sannyasin bold!  
say  
“Om Tat Sat Om”!

(4)

“Who sows must reap,” they say,  
and “cause must bring  
The sure effect; good, good; bad,  
bad; and none  
Escape the law. But whoso wears  
a form  
Must bear the chain.” Too true;  
but far beyond  
Both name and form is Atman ever  
free.  
Know thou art That, Sannyasin  
bold! say  
“Om Tat Sat Om”!

पाशाश्चिह्नं ततः स्वकांश्च सततं ये त्वां निवर्तन्ति वै  
सौवर्णाश्च तथा चमत्कृतिमतो लोहादियुक्तांश्च वा ।  
रागद्वेषशुभाशुभं च,—सकला द्वन्द्वावली दृयताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्यताम् ॥  
—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

संश्लिष्टोऽयं च दण्डितोऽपि कशया दासस्तु  
दासो हि सः  
सौवर्णस्य विघटितो यदि भवेत् पाशस्तु पाशो  
यतः ।  
बन्धयैव समर्थितः,—परमतः पाशश्च विच्छिद्य-  
ताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥ —ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

दूरं गच्छतु मोहजालजटिलं तामिस्रभृतन्तमः  
येनैतद्धि सुबुद्धिविभ्रमकरैः संवर्धतेऽन्धन्तमः ।  
एवं मोहमयी हि जीवनतृपा—सा सर्वथा शम्यताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्यताम् ॥  
—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

उत्पत्तेश्च मृतिं मृतेश्च जननं जीवोऽनयाकृष्यते  
स्वात्मा येन जितः सरवे शृणु जगत्तेनैव संजीयते  
विद्वद्येवं च सदैव मोक्षविधौ श्रुत्या व्यवस्थीय-  
ताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥ —ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

“वत्ता भुङ्क्ष्यान् विधितं फलमतः, कार्यं च वै  
कारणम्

भद्राद्भद्रमयाशुभादशुभमप्येनद्वयवस्थापितम् ।  
शक्तः कोऽपि न लेभितुं कथमपि” त्वेव त्वया  
बुद्धयताम् ।

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्यताम् ॥  
—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

“यस्त्वाकागमवाप्त्यति ध्रुवमिदं वदो भविष्यत्यसौ”  
एतत्सत्यमयापि भो ! शृणु, सदा मुक्तः सदात्मा  
यतः ।

नामाकागविवर्जितोऽस्ति च—ततः तत् त्वं हि  
निश्चीयताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितःसूक्ष्मीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

(5)

They know no truth who dream  
such vacant dreams

As father, mother, children, wife,  
and friend.

The sexless Self—whose father He ?  
Whose child ?

Whose friend, whose foe is He who  
is but One ?

The Self is all in all, none else  
exists ;

And thou art That, Sannyasin bold !  
say

“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

(6)

There is but one—The Free—The  
knower—Self !

Without a name, without a form, or  
stain.

In Him is Maya, dreaming all this  
dream,

The Witness, He appears as nature,  
soul.

Know thou art That, Sannyasin  
bold ! say

“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

ते जानन्ति न सत्यमेव नितरां ये स्वप्नसंकल्पितान्  
पश्यन्त्येव यथा—पिता च जननी पुत्राश्च पत्नी सखा  
आत्मा लिंगविवर्जितः शृणु सखे ! व्यर्थं न वै  
कल्प्यताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्यताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

आत्मा कस्य पिता ? तथा कथय भो !—

कस्यास्ति पुत्रश्च सः ?

बन्धुः कस्य ? तथा रिपुश्च वद यस्त्वेको हि  
निर्लिङ्गकः ॥

अन्यो नास्ति ततश्च सर्वमयतः,—तत् त्वं

हि निश्चीयताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

एकस्तिष्ठति नित्यमुक्तविभवः ज्ञाता सदात्मा, मुने !

नामाकारविकारकल्पनकलालेशो न तस्मिन् मुने !

साक्षात्तत्त्वमसीति विद्धि सततं ज्ञाने च निष्ठीयताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

तं चाश्रित्य तनोति मोहघटितान् स्वप्नान् हि

माया बहून्

साक्षी दृश्यतया विभाति च तथा जीवस्वरूप-  
स्तदा ।

साक्षात्तत्त्वमसीति विद्धि सततं ज्ञाने च निष्ठीयताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

—ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

(To be concluded)

# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

The mind is not attached to any objects: nor are these objects reflected in the mind. As these objects are unreal, there can be no separate reflection of them (in the mind). (26)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

As there are no external causes, the mind does not attach itself to any objects external to itself. The mind does not also reflect them and its action is like its action in dream. In the waking state also, the external objects are as unreal as those of a dream, for reasons given formerly. The reflections of objects in mind are not something different from the mind. For the mind alone externalises itself, as in dreams.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

The mind is never in relation to any cause in the three periods of time. So without a cause (external object) how can it (the mind) come to have false knowledge? (27)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

(It is objected) When there are no jars, etc., nor any reflections of jars, etc., in the mind, their knowledge must be all false. If this is so, how can one speak of true knowledge? To this we reply: The mind is never in contact with any objects that may be thought of as causes, in the three periods of time, the past, the future and the present. If it does relate itself at any time (to any objects) that would form the truth or reality in reference to which, (the cognition of) non-existent jars and their reflections, may be des-

cribed as false. There is never at any place, such a (real) relation of objects to the mind. Therefore, without a cause (external objects) how can the mind come to have a false knowledge? The meaning is that there can never be false knowledge. Therefore, it is the nature of the mind to appear as jars (and other external objects), while in reality there are no jars (or other external objects) at all.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

Therefore there is no such thing as the production (birth) of the mind or of the objects appearing before the mind. Those who are looking for such production may as well see foot-prints in the sky. (28)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

The discussion beginning with verse 24 and ending with 28, gives an account of the views of a sect of Bouddhas known as Vijñānavādins, as set forth against the views of those who believe in the reality of external objects. So far, the conclusions of the Buddhist sect, are approved by the teachers of Advaita. Taking that as the illustration, we proceed to controvert their other opinions.

The conclusions of Vijñānavādins that there are no external real objects such as jars, etc., and that the mind takes on the appearance of jars, etc., we accept, from the point of view of Reality, that is, the essence of things. The appearance of the mind taking on the shape of external objects is unreal and likewise the mind itself is not a thing produced (born). The Vijñānavādins believe that what is seen by the mind is not a product and yet say that the

mind is produced, is transitory and is of the nature of misery, non-entity and non-Atman. They try to understand the mind by the nature of the mind itself, which cannot be understood, and are therefore like those who try to see the foot-prints of birds, etc., in the sky. Therefore, they appear to be more enterprising than the dualists, their opponents. The Nihilists (Madhyamika Buddhists) who believe in absolute non-entity and, though aware of themselves (and their existence) all the time, profess to perceive void, are even more audacious (than the Vijnanavadins), trying to squeeze the whole sky in their fists.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Though the nature of a thing is never to be born, the unborn is said to be born. Such a thing as acting against one's nature can never happen. (29)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

From all that has been said, it is settled that there is only one and unborn Brahman. This verse is intended to be the end of what we set out at first to settle. The mind is unborn and is Brahman, though disputants impute birth to it, saying that the unborn is born, contradicting its very nature. Therefore, birth never accrues to a thing which is of the nature of ever being unborn.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

To a world of Samsara, said to be without a beginning, there cannot but be endlessness. To liberation (Moksha) said to have a beginning, there cannot be endlessness. (30)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Here is pointed out another error, which the believers in the reality of Moksha and of the world of Samsara, fall into.

To the world of Samsara which has no beginning and which is without any past excellence, reason cannot predicate any end. Our experience also does not point to anything which, having no beginning, is seen to have an end. If you say that it is seen in the succession of seed and sprout, we say no ; for more succession does not form a single entity. Similarly, liberation (Moksha), said to be produced at the moment of enlightenment and so, having a beginning, cannot be endless. We see an end in the case of products such as jars, etc. (which have a beginning). If you say that the illustration is not a suitable one, as Moksha is not a substance like jars, etc., you will be denying to Moksha a real objective existence and failing to prove the point you begin with. If it is non-existent like the horns of a hare, it can have no beginning.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

That which does not exist either in the beginning or end, does not also exist now (that is, when it appears). Though the objects that appear are unreal, they look as if they are real. (31)

That the objects of the waking state are found to be of use has to be construed differently in dream. Hence, as they both have a beginning and an end, they are both unreal. (32)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Those verses of Vaitathya Prakarana (6 and 7) have been commented on already. They are quoted here to strengthen our position as regards the non-existence of the world of Samsara and of liberation.

[The discussion of the point raised about waking and dream states will appear in the next issue.]



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*  
(Extracts from the *Vedanta Bulletin*)

### God and the World

As persons living in a house infested by venomous snakes are always alert and cautious, so should men living in the world be always on their guard against the allurements of lust and greed.

So long as the passions, lust, anger, etc., are directed towards the world and its objects, they are enemies; but when they are directed towards the Deity, they become the best friends of man, for they take him to the Godhead. Lust for worldly things must be changed to lust for God; the anger which you feel towards your fellow creatures must be directed towards God for not manifesting Himself to you, and so on with all your passions. The passions should not be eradicated but educated.

The snake is very venomous; it bites when any one approaches it to catch it. But the person who has learned the art of snake-charming can not only catch a snake, but carries about several of them hanging round his neck and arms like so many ornaments. Similarly, he who has acquired spiritual knowledge can never be polluted by lust and greed.

Unshod and with bare feet who will venture to walk upon thorns

and sharp stones? Shod with Divine wisdom (Tattwajñana) what thorn or sharp stone can harm you?

If you first smear the palms of your hands with oil and then break open the jackfruit, the sticky milky exudation of the fruit will not stick to the hands and thus trouble you. So if you first fortify yourself with the true knowledge of the Universal Self and then live in the midst of wealth and women, they will affect you in no way.

Fastening in thy garment the knowledge of Advaita (one-ness or non-duality), do whatever thou wishest. Good and evil cannot bind him who has realised the oneness of nature and self with Brahman.

First gain God and then gain wealth, but do not do the contrary. If after acquiring spirituality you lead a worldly life, then you will never lose your peace of mind.

As a boy holding on to a post or pillar gyrates round it with headlong speed without fear of falling, so, fixing thy hold firmly on God, perform thy worldly duties, and thou shalt be free from all dangers.

Do not let worldly thoughts and anxieties disturb your mind. Do everything that is necessary in its proper time and let your mind be always fixed on God.

---

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**KABIR AND HIS FOLLOWERS:** *By Rev. F. E. Keay, D. Litt. Published by the Association Press (Y. M. C. A.), 5, Russel St., Calcutta, and Humphrey Milford, O. U. P. Pages 186.*

This book is an important addition to the fast growing literature in English on "The Religious Life of India". Some well known European Missionaries in India are now publishing a series of volumes on this subject with the object of supplying reliable information on the various leading forms which religious life has taken in India. In certain places, however, we do come upon notes indicating a desire to show up Christianity at the expense of the religions which had their birth in India.

The importance of the present volume depends upon two facts: First, it is the most complete account in English of Kabir and the Kabir Panth. Secondly, the author has taken enormous pains to make a special study of what to him is an 'alien faith.' The book is comprehensive and compact, historical, critical and lucid, and very rarely deviating from the original sources. The book is well planned, consisting as it does, of two main sections and a dozen illustrations. The first section deals with Kabir, his environments, the various legends concerning him, the historical sources on his life, his literary works and doctrines. From an examination of the historical sources the author comes to the conclusion that Kabir was a poor weaver of the 16th century, struggling hard to maintain his family but with a "deeply religious and earnest nature which longed for union with God." After a critical analysis of the literature, the author shows that Kabir was not only a great patriot and a religious leader but an enthusiastic social reformer. "There is probably no Indian writer whose verses are more on the lips of Northern Indians than those of Kabir unless it be Tulasidas." The second section deals with the Kabir Panth, its history and organisation, its literature, rituals and doctrines, and

the sects which drew their inspiration from Kabir and his followers. The chapter dealing with these sects will be read with interest by all. But ideas that find their culmination in the last chapter which speaks of Kabir as possessing to "a large extent 'a mind naturally Christian'", which draws a contrast between Hinduism and Christianity, dubbing the former as polytheistic, which affirms that Kabir or his followers have never anywhere emphasised, as the Christian does, "the duty and privilege of self sacrificing service for others" cannot hope to get the approval of critics who have no "Christ-complex".

The book has very valuable information for teachers and students of all types. The printing and get-up are good. S.M.

**THE TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION:** *By Emanuel Swedenborg. (No. 893, Everyman's Library) Published by J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., Aldine House, Bedford St., London, W. C. 2.*

The book treats both of the philosophy and the practice of the Christian religion. The author points out the discrepancies in the conception of God the father, God the son and The Holy Ghost and ultimately proves that there is One God only, although with different aspects. The author calls Him God the Creator, God the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit. It agrees with the Hindu idea of the Trinity in a sense.

The ten commandments are explained with their natural, spiritual and celestial meanings in a very appealing manner. He tackles the problem of the Christian virtues, faith and charity, and here again he points out their essential unity. Throughout the author insists on the inner reformation and there are not a few hints for one who is earnest in his spiritual practices. The two sides of every act in every day life are presented in a beautiful and logical manner and the student can easily find out for himself, the right from the wrong. The "Memorabilia" at the end of every chapter is a valuable addition.

The book makes an exhaustive study of God and man in the light of the Christian scriptures. As both sides are presented in a logical manner the book must appeal to one and all. The universal interpretation is the true interpretation of every religion; and as tenets of the Christian religion are explained in an universal manner the book has been rightly called "The True Christian Religion."

**BRAHMANANDA KESHUB CHUNDER SEN:** *By Lalit Mohan Chatterjee, M.A., Fellow Calcutta University and Syamprasad Mookerji, M.A., B.L., Fellow, Calcutta University.*

This book is a reprint of the short sketch of Keshub's life from the book of "Representative Indians" by A.C. Dhar, B.A., published by the Popular Agency, 163, Mukhtaram Babu Street, Calcutta. The object of this reprint seems to be to place through a cheap and consequently easily accessible edition, before the young men of today most of whom have little or no faith in God and are of a sceptical turn of mind, the example of such a pure and godly soul as Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen. The life, as appearing in this sketch portrays very vividly the various sides of Keshub's activities which were crowned with success, having been based upon his strong belief in the essentials of all religions and in the efficacy of prayer to God. Keshub's steadfast adherence to his cherished principles, his untiring attempt to regenerate India in matters religious and social, his favourite doctrines "God our father, every man our brother," his conception of Universal Religion as "assimilation into wide and spiritual culture of the special ideas of different religions," and his great self-sacrifice for serving his country, endeared him to the hearts of his foes and friends alike. He was, on account of these virtues the accredited leader of the people of his time. He spoke from the heart and exercised an irrepressible effect upon his hearers. These are some of his superb qualities, which those of our young men who are burning with a desire to serve India would do well to imbibe, digest, assimilate and make part and parcel of their nature. India is passing through a critical transition

stage bristling with varied and conflicting ideas, and it is the possession of the qualities and of the heart of Keshub that will enable young men to see India emerge gloriously. We wish the book a wide circulation and would recommend its introduction as a non-detailed text book in all national schools. The book can be had of Hakumatrai Hirasig, 62, Mission Road, Karachi and G. Prasad, 84, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. P. M.

**THE PASSION AND DEATH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST:** *By the Most Reverend Archbishop Goodier, S. J. Published by Burns Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., London.*

To give an account of the Passion "as it really took place", as it affected the minds and hearts of those who underwent it and especially of Jesus himself, its Central Figure, is a difficult task. The Evangelists, as the author points out, have narrated all the incidents, as they occurred when the drama of the supreme sacrifice moved on from scene to scene; and although we are told much of the emotions of the other actors, of the mob, of the Jewish judges, of Herod or of Pilate, we hear comparatively little of the emotions of Jesus himself. Recent research has succeeded in revealing many things about the other parts of the Gospels, but about the Passion itself its contribution has not been very substantial. It is only "love, real and objective, and the insight and interpretation that come of love" that can make one enter into the true spirit of the final incidents in the ministry of Jesus on earth. And being possessed of these qualities in abundance, the author has been able to read "between the lines of the narrative" and give a very vivid presentation of what must have passed through the mind of Jesus prior to and during the actual crisis. From the Last Supper to the final "acceptance" of service, namely the drinking of the liquor the soldier held up to his lips, each incident and each word is commented upon with such deep psychological insight that the reader cannot help entering into a "real" world of feelings and emotions, irrespective of what scholars and critics of opposing

camps may have to tell about the historicity of Jesus himself. The grandeur of the personality of Jesus and the serenity of the heights from which he could view and act when confronted with the "failure" of his own dear disciples, with the betrayal, clearly foreseen, of Judas "one of the twelve", and with the humiliations and tortures of the court room and of the cross, have been brought out in a most impressive manner, and we are sure that they will have a purifying and elevating effect upon such minds as are free from dogmatism or from a spirit that looks upon religion, not as a matter for realisation, but as a field in which one group of people should endeavour to score a point or two over the rest. While commending this book to all devout hearts, we eagerly wish to see the publication of books written in a similar "sympathetic" vein on the life mission of the other great Teachers of the world.

CONFESSIONS OF AN UNBELIEVER:  
(Anonymous) Published by John Long,  
Ltd., 34 & 36, Paternoster Row, London.  
Pages 94. Price 2 Sh. 6 d. net.

Numerous forces have contributed to pull down "Religion" at the present time. Each religion is connected with a mythology or a story portion; and modern criticism has torn it to pieces from the standpoint of history or geography and concluded that religion itself is exploded. Each religion has prescribed some ritual or other, simple or elaborate, to give a "hand and eye and brain and heart training" to its votaries; and modern criticism has adopted a double argument to condemn them. It says that people without such rituals have attained greatness while those who clung to them have in the main failed. God too has been attacked from many standpoints. In India, however, there have been philosophies and schools of spiritual discipline which made aspirants evolve into illumined beings without introducing a God of the type the ordinary devotee has in mind. But to Christianised West it is unimaginable how any religion can survive when its mythology, rituals and even its "idea" of God are utterly demolished. This must be the explanation

for the cropping up of schools of thought that uphold Humanism or Duty and carry on a campaign *against* religion. To the Indian, religious life is built in agreement with and upon the very foundation of the spirit of Humanism or of Duty. His philosophy enables him to view Duty not as a *substitute* for religion, but as a *preparation* for the wider experience called religious realisation. The constructive 'side of the gospel of Duty, as explained by the author, is thus quite acceptable to the Indian mind. We can perfectly agree with him when he says that religion should not merely be "a matter for the expert or the learned" or that the creed of Duty "admits of little evasion and could not be practised just for one day in seven." We too admit, as he says, that the need is for "something now, at once, to bring some definite unselfish object in life to the evergrowing number of those who have no religious belief".

The trouble with the author, however, is that he is too much obsessed with some of the orthodox Christian doctrines. Says he: "I cannot conceive of the God of the Christian church, or indeed of any other, lending himself to a deliberate hiding of the fact of his existence and leaving mankind to search for him through a maze of obscure writings." And he childishly adds, "Therefore, as we may also assume that he is a righteous God, he cannot with any justice blame those who do not find him." The author is also troubled because some of those who have taken holy orders and joined the ranks of religious teachers do not, as he has found out, possess the strength or purity of character to deserve such a place. Some have also used their religion to maintain political authority. All this, however, does not form reason enough for concluding, as the author does, that God "is a farce" and for setting up the creed of Duty as a *rival* to the search for God. The author has spent a few years in faithful adherence to the methods which traditional Christianity prescribed; but religion, he complains, still stands unverified. True, but we have never come across any religious guarantee that after any particular period a particular experience of

Godhead should come as a matter of course. \*\*

Leaving aside the criticisms levelled at the belief in God—which we do not propose to refute in detail here—we wish that the book should be widely

read, first for the constructive aspect of its Creed of Duty, and secondly for its account of the directions in which the spirit of religion has almost everywhere become lost in its numerous non-essential, external observances.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. Math Charitable Dispensary, Mylapore, Madras

The Dispensary has now completed the eighth year of its existence. Its utility can be judged from the enormous rise in the number of patients from the second year onwards. From about 5,000 in 1926 it has now come up to more than 66,000.

The institution had been working in thatched sheds which could not accommodate all those who thronged for relief. Many were compelled through want of space to squat in the open space in the adjoining ground. Now, however, through the services of a staunch supporter, (the late Rao Bahadur S. Bhaskara Iyer, Retired Engineer, Madras) the institution has been freed from all difficulties regarding accommodation. On his suggestion, Dr. T. Ramachandran of Trichinopoly gave to the President of Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, a sum of Rs. 16,000 for the purchase of a building that could remove this drawback of the Dispensary. This donation was made to perpetuate the memory of the late Mr. V. Subramaniam, B. A., son of Mr. R. Vaithinatha Iyer of Trichinopoly. Supplementing this amount by the Dispensary Building Fund already collected, a building with a small compound directly to the south of the Math was bought and steps taken to shift the work to its more spacious rooms.

#### Needs of the Dispensary

The work of the Dispensary has increased by leaps and bounds during the brief period of its existence. The number of patients and consequently of workers attending on them, has gone up considerably, and the necessity is being daily felt for putting the institution on a sound basis financially and securing the

permanence of its work for the benefit of the poor. The following are some of its pressing needs.

#### Up-To-Date Modern Appliances and Other Necessary Outfits

It is unfortunate that owing to the want of many modern appliances and outfits, the management has often to deny adequate service to a number of poor people and cannot fully utilise the talents and experience of the doctors in charge. This want should be removed for the sake of rendering more efficient relief to such patients.

The management appeals to the generous public, who feel for the poor and the sick, to continue the active sympathy and co-operation that they have all along been giving and to come forward with liberal contributions for fulfilling the immediate needs of the institution. Donors wishing to perpetuate the memory of their friends or relatives may do so by creating memorial endowments for the maintenance of the Charitable Dispensary. A tablet bearing the names of the persons whose memory is to be perpetuated will be fixed in a suitable part of the building.

### EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK

The Ramkrishna Mission is continuing its earthquake relief work in seven Districts of Bihar, viz., Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Darbhanga, Chapra, Patna, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. Four centres, viz. those at Sitamarhi, Gangeya, and Pupri, in the Muzaffarpur District, and at Jaynagar, in the Darbhanga District, have been closed after the completion of necessary relief work. Distribution of foodstuffs, etc., has been discontinued

except at Tateria. At present the Mission is engaged mainly in constructing semi-permanent cottages for the middle classes and supplying materials for the same purpose, repairing their damaged houses, and restoring or sinking wells. The following is a brief report of the activities of the different centres :

At Muzaffarpur 14 semi-permanent cottages have been completed, and 85 are under construction. From March 16 to April 30, 24½ mds. of foodstuffs, 110 pieces of clothes, 50 blankets, 83 utensils and 263 yds. of hessian were distributed to 12 families.

The centre at Sitamarhi (Muzaffarpur) was closed on May 6. Here 16 cottages were constructed, and materials for constructing 6 more were supplied. From April 1 to May 6, 178 pieces of clothes, 65 blankets, 293 utensils, 11 lanterns and 33 yds. of hessian were distributed.

The centre at Pupri, in the above Sub-division, was closed on March 15. Since February 27, 84 mds. 15 srs. of foodstuffs, 783 pieces of clothes, 10 durries, 164 blankets, 112 utensils and 450 yds. of hessian were distributed. Pecuniary help was given to construct 145 huts.

At Motihari (Champaran) 2 cottages have been completed and 8 are under construction. From March 12 to April 8, 59 mds. 8 srs. of foodstuffs, 236 pieces of clothes, 2 durries, 67 blankets, 129 utensils and 320 yds. of hessian have been distributed to 155 families.

The activities of the Tateria centre (Champaran) cover 30 villages. Owing to the prevalence of acute distress, distribution of foodstuffs etc., will have to be continued here. From March 12 to April 30, 632 mds. 6 srs. of foodstuffs, 779 pieces of clothes, 51 blankets, 377

utensils, and 1508 yds. of hessian were distributed to 1020 families. \*

The rural centre of Manjha (Chapra) was opened on April 8. Up to April 30, 95 wells were restored or repaired, 44 were under restoration, and 7 were under construction.

At Laheria Sarai (Darbhanga) 15 cottages have been completed, and 5 are under construction. From March 14 to April 30, 4 mds. 18 srs. of foodstuffs, 131 pieces of clothes, 15 durries, 16 blankets, and 20 utensils have been distributed to 6 families.

At Samastipur (Dabhangra) from April 1 to April 30, 3 cottages were constructed, and 7 were under construction, and 507 corrugated iron sheets were sold at half price. Besides, 7½ mds. of foodstuffs, 6 lanterns and 1 tarpaulin were distributed.

At Patna from March 16 to April 30, 21 mds. of foodstuffs were distributed. Materials for the construction of 11 cottages were supplied, 5 houses were repaired, and 3 more were under repair.

At Monghyr 13 cottages have been constructed, and others are under construction. At Jamalpur, in this District, 19 cottages have been constructed.

At Bhagalpur 3 cottages have been constructed, and 86 houses have been repaired.

We are grateful to the Mayor of Calcutta for allotting us from his Earthquake Relief Fund Rs. 60,000 for the above work.

Further contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following address :

The President, Ramakrishna Mission,  
Belur Math P. O., Dt. Howrah.

15-5-1934 (Sd.) VIRAJANANDA,

*Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.*



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman,"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXII

AUGUST, 1934

[No. 4]

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

धर्मस्य विधयो नैको ये व प्रोक्ता महर्षिभिः ।  
स्वं स्वं विज्ञानमाश्रित्य दमस्तेषां परायणम् ॥  
दमं निश्रेयसे प्राहुर्ब्रह्मा निश्रेयदर्शिनः ।  
ब्राह्मणस्य विशेषेण दमो धर्मः सनातनः ॥  
दमात्तस्य क्रियासिद्धिर्यथावदुपलभ्यते ।  
दमो दानं तथा यज्ञानधीतं चातिवर्तते ॥

The rules of virtuous conduct taught by the great Seers, each of whom relied upon his own Illumination, are manifold. The highest among them all is self-control.

Those amongst the ancients that were acquainted with Truth said that self-control leads to the highest beatitude. As regards the Brahmana in particular, self-control is his eternal duty.

It is from self-control that this aspirant after the knowledge of Brahman obtains the due fruition of his efforts. In his case self-control surpasses (in merit) charity and sacrifice and study of the Vedas.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CLX, 6, 7 and 8)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

*Why did the Master marry? Was it due to the Importunity of the Relatives?*

WHOEVER inquires about the life of the Master, is puzzled with the question, 'Why did the Master marry?' The thought of having physical relations with the wife never arose in his mind. What then was the reason? Indeed, it is very difficult to find out any. As soon as he came of age, it may be urged, he became almost mad after God; and that is why the relatives got him married perforce. But that, we think, is not at all likely. From the very earliest days none could make him do even a most unimportant thing against his own will. Whatever he resolved to do, he did accomplish invariably by some means or other. Take for instance his choosing Dhani, the blacksmith woman for his godmother (the lady who gets the honour and privilege of offering the first dole of alms to the neophyte) during the thread ceremony. Social customs in Kamarpukur were not at all loose, as in Calcutta, that one might do whatever one liked with them. The Master's parents, too, were not in the least indifferent regarding the strict observance of the obligatory rites to the very letter. According to the family practice also, only a Brahmin woman could be selected as the godmother. The guardians of Gadadhat, one and all,

were against the boy's accepting the first alms from the blacksmith woman. It is no small wonder that inspite of all these obstacles, Dhani was finally selected for the godmother, and that on account of the importunities of Gadadhar alone. Thus we find, in all matters the Master's will and determination would always carry the day when they came in conflict with those of other persons. Such being the case, how can we still maintain that an incident of vital importance as this marriage was in his life, is ascribable solely to the desires and importunities of the relatives?

*Was the marriage effected by his desire for sense enjoyment?*

Or again, it may be contended, what is the necessity of taking it for granted that the spirit of complete renunciation brought about by one-pointed love of God, was present in the Master from the very beginning? The problem can be easily solved, if only we hold, on the other hand, that like other normal human beings the Master, too, had in the beginning the desire for enjoyments of married life, but he had no sooner reached the adult age than a radical change appeared in his mind. A mighty storm of renunciation and God-intoxication came upon him, and swept clean all the early desires off his mind once for all. But the Master's marriage took place before the onslaught of



this hurricane. Apparently the argument is quite convincing, no doubt. But there are several unanswerable objections. First: He married when he was twenty-one years of age. During this period the spirit of renunciation was sweeping over him with full force. Moreover, averse as he had ever been to causing the slightest inconvenience to any being whatsoever, it is not at all likely that he proceeded quite thoughtlessly to do something which would possibly involve a girl in perpetual misery. Secondly: The more closely we ponder over the life of the Master the clearer it becomes to us that no event in the Master's life was without a deep significance of its own.

*The Master's Prophesy about his pre-ordained Bride*

His marriage was certainly not against his will. For, when his nephew Hriday and other members of the family were busy in their search for the bride, it was he who told them that it was pre-ordained that his marriage would take place with the daughter of Sjt. Ramachandra Mukherji of Jayrambati. This may seem quite surprising to the reader, and with a gesture of disbelief he will perhaps remark, "The author is too fond of bringing in unnatural events now and again. Who will believe these stories in this twentieth century!" In reply we are compelled to say, "You may or may not believe, as you please. But nevertheless it was an actual fact. There are many living to this day who bear witness to its truth.

Why don't you please inquire and see for yourself?" When the relatives failed to find a girl for his bride up to their choice, the Master himself told them, "Why! The girl is kept selected already\*, you will find." Therefore it is clear that the Master knew not only that he was to marry, but also where and whom to marry, and did not raise any objection to it. He had this foreknowledge, of course in a state of *Samadhi*.

*Was the Master's Marriage due to his Past Karma?*

What is the meaning then of the Master's marriage? Here our readers who are familiar with the scriptures will probably remark with great annoyance: "What a big fool the author is! Why does he make so much fuss about so simple a matter as this? No one should take to writing biographies of saints unless one has acquired some knowledge of the scriptures. God-realisation or perfect knowledge, as our scriptures hold, destroys all past *Karmas*, save the *Prarabdhas*, i.e. those that have already begun to bear fruit. The illustration is here given of the hunter in the process of hunting. He has some arrows stored in the quiver, one in the hand ready for use, and another just released at a bird on a tree.

\* Selected—literally it will be, 'marked with a straw'; i.e., his marriage with that girl is pre-ordained; or, the girl is destined by Providence to be his bride. The allusion is to a common practice in villages. When a peasant selects a particular fruit of a tree as the best offering to God, he keeps it marked with a straw tied to it lest he should forget and sell it away.

Suppose at this moment he is seized with the spirit of renunciation. He makes up his mind not to do harm to any creature hereafter. He casts aside the arrow in the hand. Those in the quiver, also, are similarly disposed of. But can he hold back the one he has already let off? The arrows in the quiver are the *Sanchita Karmas*, those that he has accumulated during his past lives. The one in the hand signifies the *Kriyamana Karmas*, those that are in the process of being accumulated. And the arrow already released is likened to the *Prarabdha Karmas*, those that have begun to bear fruit. The effect of the last mentioned group of actions must come. Great saints like Sri Ramakrishna suffer only the *Prarabdha Karma* in their lives. This is inevitable. They can know beforehand how in accordance with their *Prarabdha Karma* events will happen in their lives. Hence it is no wonder that Sri Ramakrishna could foretell who would be his bride and where the marriage was to take place."

*Prarabdha has no power over Truly Enlightened Souls; and much less over the Master. For, he would say, "The same Deity that appeared as Rama and Krishna, has now come as Ramakrishna."*

True, our knowledge of the scriptures is quite meagre. But nevertheless the little understanding that we possess shows clearly that a truly illumined soul is never dominated by *Prarabdha*. For, how is it possible for him to have joys and

sorrows when the mind through which these experiences are to come has been tied by him to the feet of God once for all? Again, it may be contended, it is his body that will enjoy or suffer according to *Prarabdha*. But how is that too possible? His *Prarabdha* can yield fruit only if he voluntarily retains a little trace of his ego for some special reason, say, for doing good to others; then alone can he have experiences of his body and mind and the *Prarabdha Karmas* bear fruit. Therefore it depends entirely upon the illumined soul himself whether he will accept or reject *Prarabdha*. He attains to perfect freedom as to the choice of either. That is why such persons are called 'the omniscient,' 'conquerors of death,' 'masters of desire' etc., etc.

Moreover, if the experience of the Master is to be relied upon, he cannot be called merely an illumined soul; he never comes under that class at all. For, we have heard him repeat time and again, "He who was Rama and Krishna, is now Ramakrishna," that is, the same Deity that incarnated as Rama and Krishna, has again appeared in the present age in the form of Ramakrishna. If we are to believe this statement, he must be accepted as an incarnation of God, eternally Pure, Illumined and Free by nature. Then we cannot again hold that he is under the sway of *Prarabdha*. Hence we think it proper to explain the Master's marriage in a different way; and that is what we propose to do next.

## UNDER THE FOREST TREES

### Withdrawal Usual

**H**IRANYAKASIPU, so the story goes, asked his son, Prahlad, to describe the best lesson he had learnt. Straight came the reply, "I think, father, that men ought to abandon the blinding pit of domestic relationships, ruinous to Atman, and *repair to the forest* to remain devoted to the Lord." <sup>1</sup> Boy Prahlad, it is true, had the rare privilege of being initiated into the Highest Wisdom by the most venerable Narada himself, even prior to his birth. But this attitude of looking upon the forest as a place helpful to spiritual practice was not a special virtue impossible to acquire without such a sage's blessing and instruction. For every sincere seeker of those ancient days, who effected some substantial development of his personality by the proper discharge of the functions of a husband, father and citizen, had before him the possibility of a further expansion and of freedom from rigidity if he went to the forest and joined the group of the higher grade aspirants residing there. Manu's syllabus accordingly contained the injunction that "after having duly fulfilled the duties of a householder,

a Snataka Brahmin, with all the passions of his heart sobered and calmed, *shall live in the forest, self-controlled.*" <sup>2</sup> Even there, however, the necessity would sooner or later arise for a more thorough exploration of the deeper layers of the mind. The aspirant then would be obliged to leave all companions behind and embark upon a more rigorous discipline absolutely *alone*. It was for this reason that not only Jesus but all seekers as well as teachers often withdrew "a stone's cast" from their fellow-strugglers or followers and went up into the wilderness for silent communion with the Nameless.

### Different Needs of Beginner and Adept

If solitude, then, is a necessity for spiritual unfoldment should not all aspirants be encouraged to leave the haunts of men and retire into the jungle so that their practices can be rendered easy and quick in yielding fruits? It is only that person who has achieved a fair measure of mental control that can carry on his practice in whatever surroundings he finds himself to be. The common distractions ranging from whispers to shouts, consequent upon the activities of even the sym-

1. तत् साधु मन्येऽसुरवर्षे । देहिनां  
सदा समुद्रिमधियामसद्ग्रहात् ।  
हित्वात्मपातं गृहमन्धकूपं  
वनं गतो यद् अरिमाश्रयेत् ॥

(Bhagavatam VII, 7, 5)

2. एवं गृहाश्रमे स्थित्वा  
विधिवत्स्नातको द्विजः ।  
वने वसेत्तु नियतो  
यथावद्विजितेन्द्रियः ॥ (Manu VI, 1)

pathetic inmates of his household, would be too feeble to penetrate beyond the outermost fringes of his field of awareness. Even if there be important matters, kept pending, connected with the management of domestic affairs, they might sink into relative insignificance on the approach of the time set apart for daily practice. It might also be that every difficult situation arising from his contacts with people would only have the welcome effect of increasing his capacity to clear his mind at will and hold it steadily on the chosen track. What would baffle and upset an untrained mind would, in the case of such a person, enhance progressively his power of control and establish him in the inner plane from which he can operate the keys to balanced judgment and behaviour in the outer world. Our problem, however, is not about the steps such an advanced seeker has to take, but about the discipline the beginner must undergo. To him, his house with perhaps a hostile neighbour to be conciliated, or the legitimate income yet remaining uncollected, all educated youths unemployed or the baby crying because of ill-health, must be the least convenient place for any profitable attempt at mind control. He may no doubt manage to sit motionless and with closed eyes for a time, but he would find it a hopeless task to think steadily even about any one of the domestic difficulties themselves. What need then to speak of keeping all these powerful intruding thoughts at bay

and of a positive remembrance of holy things? Rather than attempt the impossible, it were better far he avoided them clean and wended his way to the secluded spots of the jungle whose serene air no human sighs ever defiled.

In reality, however, the retreat into solitude often proves a woefully inadequate solution of the problem. Such a precipitate withdrawal has many serious drawbacks a few of which we propose to take up for discussion here.

### **Adaptability to be Gained at Home**

No one denies that spiritual practice requires a calm atmosphere and that the very familiarity of the home and its surroundings can act as a store-house of disturbing influences to the beginner. But what is the guarantee that the disturbances would disappear by a mere change of environment? Even viewing from the level where sights and sounds constitute the main obstacles to daily practice, we have to admit that nothing remarkable is gained by the device of shifting one's abode into the wilderness. For sights and sounds abound in the forest as well. And if the tall trees with their massive trunks and spreading branches can be suggestive of the broad-hearted sage wrapt in solemn meditation, what is there in the four-footed denizens of the jungle to facilitate the recollection of spiritual verities? The mind that could be unhinged by a preponderance of painful situations in human society has little chance

of remaining unruffled in the kingdom of brutes either. It might be argued that the fear of physical danger and the like would considerably be reduced as one gets more and more accustomed to forest life, till at last the time would come when the mind could with ease be fixed on holy thoughts. But on this hypothesis it should be equally possible for the aspirant to get similarly accustomed within a reasonable time to the sense of worry and insecurity arising from domestic or social relationships also. To feel accustomed to any given situation to such an extent that it cannot seriously interfere with one's daily devotions is itself an important stage of the desired control. And if an aspirant has not acquired this bare minimum of adaptability while in the midst of an environment containing a few friends at least, sympathetically disposed toward him, it is a vain hope to expect adaptability to develop in him somehow when tiger's claws and tiger's jaws display as much reality around him as has the tiger's skin he spreads beneath for a seat!

### **Intermediate Stage of Company**

The advocates of retreat may reply by telling that the aspirant who leaves society does not directly get into the state of complete isolation, which to them looks like the state of complete freedom, but prepares himself for it by an intermediate stage of living in the company of the advanced aspirants of the forest. This arrangement has undoubtedly many points in its favour. For one

thing it is not a case of flying from the frying pan into the fire since the aspirant is not exchanging society's mixture of pain and pleasure for the unmixed terrors of the wilderness. While dwelling in groups the element of fear becomes negligible and the mental energy saved in this manner can be diverted for undergoing higher discipline. In the matter of such discipline itself, he need not grope and land himself in dangers; for he can get facilities for opening his mind to others who have been longer in the field and who would be prepared to help him ungrudgingly if approached for honest discussion and comparison of notes.

### **What does Society Lack?**

To this altered form of the plaint let us in the first instance reply by asking what is gained by transferring this spiritual academy from the vicinity of human beings who form its present and prospective members, to the region of brutes. What are the special virtues of the forest-trees or of the forest air which can crown with success the practices carried on under their auspices; and what are the special defects of society which must doom identical practices to certain failure? What would be lost if associations for spiritual culture are started in society itself and so equipped as to provide all the advantages forest life is supposed to give, eliminating at the same time the dangers attendant upon it? What rare gift has the forest to confer, which society can never hope to give however much

it tries? Or, again, what serious obstacle to spiritual evolution is imbedded in the very structure of society and happily absent from the precincts of the forest?

### Helps to Meditation

There are many who believe, and experience too, that to the person who has risen above all apprehension of physical danger the forest can supply many a powerful stimulus for the awakening and retention of divine thoughts. In the presence of vastness and of grandeur the human mind has a natural tendency to drop all recollection of its petty worries and limitations and emerge into finer states of awareness where tension is lost and a sense of release takes its place. The glories of the sunset or the sunrise, the mighty ocean, dark-heaving and boundless, the starry expanse of the midnight sky, the solemn shade of forest trees, strains of distant music wafted by the gentle breeze,—these are charged with an unfailing power to soothe overstrung nerves and obliterate for a time the painful impressions occasioned by the struggles of life. Even in persons whom fortune has blessed with the best things of life and the contentment born therefrom, stimulus of this type (रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्) can arouse unique emotions accompanied sometimes by tears and always by a purifying and elevating sense of exquisite bliss, once theirs but now evidently lost. This chastening effect operates at first only for a time and is not recoverable at will; but continued practice

enables the earnest seeker to swing himself with ease into serene heights by focussing his thoughts on any of these symbols of vastness and splendour. Indeed, as the Yoga Shastra says, restlessness is overcome and posture steadied by contemplating on the limitless character of Akasa etc.,<sup>3</sup> leading for the time to the assimilation of their attributes and to non-identification with the body and its feelings of comfort and discomfort. The Gita too winds up its long list of divine manifestations suitable for meditation with the comprehensive statement that anything glorious, good, beautiful and mighty has sprung into existence from a fraction of the Lord's own energy. It is significant how the list itself includes, in addition to the sun and the moon, the Ganges and the ocean, also the Asvattha among trees, Meru among mountains and the Himalayas among massive immobile objects. Seated, then, under an Asvattha tree on a mountain slope, and contemplating on the glory of the Supreme Support<sup>4</sup> of the universe radiant with its heavenly orbs, any average

### 3. प्रयत्नशैथिल्यानन्त्यसमापत्तिभ्याम्

(Īatanjuli II, 47)

यदा चाऽऽकाशादिगत आनन्त्ये चेतसः समापत्तिः क्रियतेऽवधानेन तादात्म्यमापद्यते तदा देहाहंकाराभावान्नाऽसनं दुःखजनकं भवति ॥

(Bhoja)

4. The reading "अनन्तसमापत्तिः" bears the comment that the aspirant is to contemplate on Ananta, the Lord of serpents, who holds up the universe with his thousand hoods. "अनन्ते नागनायके स्थिरतरफणासहस्रविधृतविश्व-भरामण्डले समापन्नं चित्तं आसनं निर्वर्तयति ॥"

aspirant must find within him a spontaneous awakening of divine moods paving the way for ultimate illumination.

### **Question of Special Aptitudes**

In this course of reasoning, however, the main point is, to some extent, missed. For in meditations of this nature, forest life does not seem to be the decisive factor at all. The principle involved is rather that by prolonged contemplation of any object, the aspirant's mind acquires its virtues, first as they are conceived by him to be, but later on as they are in reality. Any beautiful scenery, not necessarily in a forest, would therefore do for the purpose; and it is clear that one need not literally quit society in order to get a view of sunset or the ocean or the starry heavens. Where a lake or a river or the sea happens to be in view, one can as well sit down, late at night if need be, and derive all the benefit the beauties of the forest can give.

It has thus become a simple question of the capacity to appreciate grandeur and of making it a means to control emotions. If an aspirant has had sufficient practice in this method of utilising his special aptitudes while in the midst of society, he will certainly find it possible to adopt the same device when seated beneath the forest trees. But without any previous training in this line the mind, although away from society, will still be entirely at the mercy of the disturbing influences acting on it hitherto. A certain

amount of detachment is necessary for fixing the attention upon beauties alone in a mixed environment of beauty and terror. This detachment, if acquired while in society, can be drawn upon at will when beyond it also; but it is risky to reserve it as the first lesson to be learnt on arriving at a forest. For physical distance does not automatically produce mental aloofness.

### **Retreat Pattern would not do**

Let us ask why it is that although the sun rises and sets every day we do not, even if instructed, lift our minds as often by contemplating on the splendour bathing "castle walls and snowy summits old in story". The answer is plain: Our minds are pre-occupied with other things. What Hamlet told with reference to a particular context, we use for a hundred others and excuse ourselves by telling, "Here is metal more attractive." Affairs whose unpleasant consequences we wish to avoid or whose delights we yearn for, exert silent, insistent pulls upon the fibres of our inner being and engage the conscious mind, making us blind and deaf to the sights and sounds that might prove suggestive of sacred things otherwise. What boils up in the mind and makes meditation impossible in one's own house with the midnight stars twinkling overhead, is certain to boil up in spite of any drastic change in the place of sitting. These deep-seated hindrances to spiritual practice have to be studied thoroughly, arranged in groups and

got rid of by persistent adoption of various methods.

Where we are likely to make a mistake is in the assumption that retreat from the field of battle is equivalent to a destruction of the enemy. Thoughts inimical to Yoga arise in the mind because the mind contains their seeds, namely the impressions of all we ever wished to achieve and the comments we have been making on the fractions gained or lost. And since this mind is carried by its owner wherever he goes, the seeds are bound to remain with him intact, until positive steps are taken to destroy their germinating power. Avoiding a tussle with them, thinking the process is inconvenient, will still leave them unaffected. "He who relinquishes an action from fear of physical suffering, saying 'Painful', performs a passionate relinquishment and obtains not the fruits of relinquishment." (Gita xviii, 8) They can however be overpowered by the cultivation of wider interests in life, by the employment of greater energy in particular virtuous directions, till the habit of *facing* troubles is acquired as a permanent possession. Spiritual conquests are similar to the conquests in other depart-

ments of life inasmuch as both come to him who knows what weapons to take and how to wield them to advantage. Retreat may sometimes be good as a step in the fight; but it is useless if thereby the enemy gets a chance to advance and reproduce the situation from which escape was sought. In such a case fight is the only remedy. And it is he alone, who has learnt to *conquer* a good many of the obstacles met with in daily life, that can make a healthy detachment, at will, from the intruding thoughts that mar his spiritual practice in the forest. On the other hand he who has made himself a slave to the retreating pattern of behaviour will find it hard to change into a fighting pattern after his flight from home. "Grim" reality has to be faced and a fair amount of skill acquired in the use of the weapons of fight and detachment, before any change of surroundings can be fruitful. Else the aspirant comes under the class of people who sit restraining their senses of action but remain inwardly drawn to the objects of enjoyment as well as pain.

*Solitude is helpful if one knows how and when to resort to it.*

---



## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

6th Sravana, 1325 B.E.

**I**T was half-past-seven when I arrived at the house of the Holy Mother. She greeted me with her usual smile and said, "It is a very warm day. Take a little rest and refresh yourself. What about your sister? Has she reached home?"

Devotee: Yes, Mother. I started after she had reached home.

Mother: Take this fan for Radhu and rub this medicinal oil on my back. There are heat-blisters all over my body.

As I started rubbing the oil, the bell rang for the evening worship. The Holy Mother sat on her bed and saluted God with folded hands. Other devotees went to the Shrine room to witness the worship.

The Mother said, "Everybody says regretfully, 'There is so much misery in the world. We have prayed so much to God, but still there is no end of misery.' But misery is the only gift of God. It is the symbol of His compassion. Is it not so?"

That day my mind was greatly troubled. Did she really know it and therefore address those words to me? The Mother continuing said, "Who has not suffered from misery in this world? Brinde, the woman-devotee of Krishna, said to him: 'Who says that you are compassionate? In your incarna-

tion as Rama you made Sita weep for you all through her life. And in this incarnation as Krishna, Radha has been weeping on your account. Your parents suffered extreme agony in the prison of Kamsa and cried day and night uttering your name. Then why do I repeat your name? It is because your name removes all fear of death.'"

The conversation drifted to Sachin Maharaj and Devabrata Maharaj, the two monks of the Ramakrishna Mission who had died lately. The Mother said, "Sachin was a fortunate boy. It was a rainy and stormy night when Devabrata passed away in this house. There were only a few persons here. I was at Koalpara. Sachin gave up his body in the morning. The house was crowded. I was also there. Devabrata was a real Yogi."

Referring to a woman, the Holy Mother said, "People of that appearance are generally devoid of Bhakti, devotion to God. I heard it from Sri Ramakrishna."

Devotee: Yes, Mother. I read in the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna that he used to say that some people who are not frank cannot make real spiritual progress.

Mother: Oh, you are referring to that? He said those words in the house of a devotee named Naran. A man had a mistress. She once

came to Sri Ramakrishna and said with repentance, "That man ruined me. Then he robbed me of my money and jewellery." Sri Ramakrishna was aware of the innermost contents of people's minds. But still he would like to hear about things from their mouth. He said to that woman, "Is it true? But he used to give us tall talks about devotion." Then he described those traits which stand in the way of spirituality. However, the woman confessed to him all her sins and was thus released from their evil effects.

Nalini: How is it possible, Mother? How can one absolve oneself from sin by simply expressing it in words? Is it possible to wash away sin in this manner?

Mother: Why not, my dear child? Sri Ramakrishna was a perfect soul. Certainly one can be free from sin by confessing it to him. Listen. If at a certain place people talk of virtue and vice, those present there must take a share of those qualities.

Nalini: How is it possible?

Mother: Let me explain. Imagine a man confessed to you his virtue or vice. Then whenever you will think of that man, you will remember his virtuous or sinful acts. And they will thus leave an impression upon your mind. Is it not true, my child?

Again the talk turned to human misery, affliction and worry.

The Mother said: "Many people come to me and confess their worries. They say, 'We have not

realised God. How can we attain to peace?' So on and so forth. I look at them and I think of myself. The thought flashes in my mind: Why do they say so? Am I then a superhuman being? I never knew what worry was. And the vision of God, it lies, as it were, in the palm of my hand. Whenever I like it I can have it."

We had read about the 'Robber Father' of the Holy Mother. I wanted to hear about the incident from the Mother herself and said to her, "Mother. I read in the book that once upon a time you were coming to Dakshineswar. Lakshmi Didi and others were with you. You could not keep pace with them. It was almost dusk. You had been following them when you met your Robber parents."

"It is not a fact," the Mother said, "that I was altogether alone. Two other old ladies were with me. Three of us lagged behind. Then I suddenly met with that man with curly hair and dark colour, carrying a big stick in his hands. I was simply stupefied at his sight. The man also understood the state of our mind and asked, 'Hallo! Who are you? Where are you going?' I said, 'We are going to the east.' 'This is not the way,' he remarked, 'follow that path.' Seeing me standing still, he said in re-assuring voice, 'Don't be afraid. There is a woman with me. She will be here in a moment.' I at once addressed him as my 'Father' and took shelter with him. I was not, then, so weak, my darling. I had physi-

cal strength. I walked on foot continually for three days. I never felt any difficulty in circumambulating round Brindavan on foot." Continuing she said, "Have you seen the Concert House at Dakshineswar? I used to stay there. The room was so low that at first I would knock my head against the upper frame of the door. One day I cut my head. Then I became accustomed to it. The head bent of itself as soon as I would approach the door. Many fat aristocratic women of Calcutta frequently came there. They did not enter the room. They would stand at the door leaning forward by placing their two hands on the two sides of the door frame. Peeping at the room they would often remark addressing me, "Ah, what a tiny room of our good girl! She is in exile, as it were." Then addressing her nieces, she said, "You could not stay at such a place, even for a day." "True, aunt," they ejaculated, "Everything is so different with you."

Devotee : We read in the Life of Sri Ramakrishna by Gurudas Barman that they built a big house for you later on. It is also mentioned in the book that one day Sri Ramakrishna was in that house and that he could not return to his room on account of heavy rain.

Mother : That is not true, my child. Where is the big house? There was an ordinary small house. Sarat (Swami Saradananda) has recorded correctly the events of Sri Ramakrishna's life. The Gospel of

Sri Ramakrishna by 'M' is also nice. It is, as it were, because he has put down the exact words of the Master. How sweet are those words! I hear that he has enough material for four or five books like that. But now he is old. I doubt if he will be able to undertake the task. He has amassed a great deal of money from the sale of the book. That money has been kept on deposit. He has given one thousand rupees for building my house at Jayrambati and other incidental expenses. He also sends me ten rupees every month. He gives twenty rupees or more when I stay in Calcutta. Formerly he used to give me two rupees a month. He was then a school teacher.

Devotee : I hear that Girish Babu contributed in the beginning a large amount of money for the maintenance of the monks.

Mother : Not a large amount. Suresh Mitra was rather munificent in his contribution. Girish also gave money now and then. He at one time defrayed all my expenses for a year and a half. How can he have made a large contribution? He was never a rich man. The early part of his life was not very clean. He lived in bad company and acted on the stage. But he was a man of wonderful faith. Therefore he received such grace from Sri Ramakrishna. In this incarnation Sri Ramakrishna has redeemed Girish. Each incarnation of God is marked by an incident like this. Gauranga saved the two brothers Jagai and Madhai. Again,

Sri Ramakrishna once remarked that Girish has within him the trait of Siva. "What is there in money, my child? Sri Ramakrishna could not touch it. His hand would recoil before money. He said, "This world is illusory. Had I known it to be otherwise, then I would have covered your Kamar-pukur with the leaf of gold. But I know it to be impermanent. God alone is real."

Maku, her niece, said sorrowfully, "I could not settle myself at one place!" The mother replied, "How is that? Wherever you live you must feel quite at home. You think that you will be happy at your husband's place. How is that possible? You are now staying with me. It is just like your father's place. Do not married girls, sometimes, live with their parents? Can't you practise renunciation a little?"

I requested the Holy Mother to speak a little more of Sri Ramakrishna. She said, "The events are often not correctly recorded in books. Rama (a household devotee

of Sri Ramakrishna) wrongly recorded the incident of the Master's worshipping me." She narrated the incident and then added, "This incident did not take place at Jayrambati, but at Dakshineswar, in his own room. Hriday, our nephew, made all arrangements for the ceremony."

Yogin-Ma, at that time, stood by the window, and I was talking to her. The Mother said, "Come in. I hardly see you nowadays." Yogin-Ma laughed and entered the room. Her foot touched my body. As she was about to salute me with folded hands, I interrupted her and prostrated myself before her. "What is this, Yogin-Ma?" said I, "I am not even fit to take the dust of your feet. Why should you salute me because your foot touched my body?" In reply Yogin-Ma said, "Why not? A snake, whether big or small, is a snake all the same. You are all devotees and therefore worthy of our respect." I looked at the Mother. The same kind smile lit her face. I took leave of her late at night.

## INDIAN METAPHYSICS TODAY

*By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.*

### Nowhere Self-contradictory

INDIAN metaphysics is today in a stronger position than ever before. Victor Cousin has said well: "India contains the whole history of philosophy in a nutshell." To outside students and uninformed inside students of our metaphysics with its harmonious affirmations in the realms of logic, cosmology, psychology, ethics, epistemology, eschatology and ontology, our metaphysical achievement appears as a bewildering and even self-contradictory and discordant variety. But a careful study will show the harmonious, grand and sublime design, proportion and construction of the palatial fabric of Indian thought. The Lord said in the Gita: *अथात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहं* (I am the science of spirituality among all sciences; and among utterers of truth I am the utterance of spiritual truth). The unity of all Indian metaphysics is in God.

### No Puerile Fights Again

Whatever theebb and flow of metaphysical thought may have been in India, the Indian race has settled down in certain root-ideas; and he is no friend of India or of the world who stirs up the muddy waters of theological discussion again in India, creating a self-division in the national mind and making India unfit to achieve internal unity

and a re-attainment of the spiritual leadership of the world. The battles of gods and demons (देवासुरयुद्ध) are over; let us not fight all those battles over again. No more shall we fight over the Nirguna-Saguna controversy. No more shall we try to find out if Siva is Paramatman and Vishnu is a Jiva, or if Vishnu is Paramatman and Siva is a Jiva. No more shall we enter into the still more futile and puerile discussion as to whether Lakshmi belongs to the Brahma Koti or the Jiva Koti (God or soul). To one mind the name Ranganatha may appeal and to another the name Sabhapathi may appeal, though both the names mean etymologically the same thing. No longer can India tolerate such intellectual cobwebs as those found in Govindaraja's commentary on the Ramayana where he says that the name Visālākshi belongs to Lakshmi or Sita, and has been misappropriated by Parvathi; and that Ganga has, because she came from Vishnu's feet, managed to retain her purity though she touched the head of Siva!

### Not to be Partitioned

Some symbols and ideas are our precious and supreme common possession and let us not have a bitter partition suit over them. The concept of Brahma performing penance and uttering the Veda to guide

creation on its way; the concept of the white-robed Saraswathi with book and Vina and rosary; the concept of Lakshmi on the blossomed lotus; the concept of Narayana sleeping on the waters in *Yoga Sushupthi* (all-seeing Yogic sleep) with Lakshmi by His side and Brahma on His navel-lotus; the concept of Nataraja dancing the rhythmic dance of universal energy, now destructive and now constructive; the concept of Siva plunged in meditation on the Himalayas; the concept of Devi, now as a little girl performing penance, now as a bride, now as the universal Mother, now as the giver of rest to the universe in apparent destruction, and finally as the bestower of Brahma-Vidya; the concept of Nara and Narayana symbolising the comradeship of the individual soul and the Oversoul; the concept of the Eternal Archer, Rama, overthrowing the forces of Evil and establishing Dharma; the concept of the Eternal Musician, Krishna, overcoming the discords of life by the swelling strains of spirituality; the Eternal Charioteer, Krishna, teaching the soul (Arjuna) the way to the Supreme Paradise (Parama Vyoma); the eternal Dakshinamurthi facing the south and turning souls away from the Land of Death toward the Paradise of Immortality by showing the *Chinmudra*; the unity of soul and God; the Eternal Ardhanariswara revealing in His form the oneness of Law and Love, the divine Subrahmanya and the divine Gopala drawing our hearts to them by the appeal-

ing sweetness of child form and the child-love; and more than anything else, the glorious *Visvarupa* described in Chapter XI of the Gita—these and other concepts belong to all of us. Each belongs to all and all belong to each. Off with all dividing and desecrating hands!

### Stress on Discipline

The next important thing to bear in mind is that modern Indian metaphysics is rooted in the great truth that *the Sadhana is a discipline of life* and not a mere intellectual ferment or an intellectual assent. The concept of Varna Dharmas and Ashrama Dharmas implies this concept of discipline. It does not imply any social superiority or inferiority or social cleavage and discord and hatred. The Dharma is the means—nay, is the sole means,—of *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Vairagya* (dispassion). The Indian mind does not like the life of sensualism and desire or the life of premature asceticism. It aims at rising by means of Karma Yoga to Raja Yoga and thence to the highest Bhakthi Yoga and Jnana Yoga and thence to the highest realisation (Anubhava).

### Further Points of Agreement

There are other fundamental common ideas as well. The soul transcends mind and matter and is beyond the *Gunas*. It is immortal and is *Satchidananda* in its nature. About this the higher Indian metaphysics speaks with a single voice, whatever be the disputes among the schools of metaphysics as to whether the soul is

atomic or infinite, is one or many and is one with or different from the Oversoul. Indian Metaphysics affirms also the doctrines of Karma and transmigration. It affirms further that the supreme beatitude is in the deliverance from *Samsara* or the bonds of birth and death. This is not pessimism at all though it has been so stigmatised. It is rather a search for a permanent abode of bliss above and beyond this web of pain and pleasure which constitutes life in the universe. It affirms the *Pitriyāna* and the *Devayāna* and *Kramamukti* and *Jivanmukti* as different levels of the soul's attainment of bliss. Indian Metaphysics says also that the universe is composed of the three *Gunas*, that it is God's handiwork and not a self-created, self-active and self-directing, blind, unconscious material force. It affirms also the glory and majesty of God as *Satchidananda*, apart from all controversies about the *Nirguna* and *Saguna* aspects of God.

### Illumination through Ishtam

The central truths of *Ishta Devata* and *Ishta Sadhana* discovered by the Indian intellect are also of very great importance. So far as we have faith and dispassion and devotion, God will accept us and give us the supreme realisation by leading us ever nearer to His lotus feet. The Lord says in the *Gita*: मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः "Men follow from all directions the path leading unto Me." (*Gita* III, 23) He says that if we love Him

He will light the lamp of knowledge in our heart and drive away all our inner darkness.

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

(*Gita*, X, II.)

### Behind the Different Systems

So far as the enormous variety of metaphysical affirmations already discussed are concerned, let us not forget that they are as old as the hills and that each system has its roots in the dim past. It is said in the *Anu Gita*, Chapter XXIV, of the *Mahabharata*: "Some say that everything is doubtful; and others that there is no doubt. Some say that the permanent entity is impermanent, and others say that it is permanent, and yet others say that it exists and does not exist. Some say that it is of one form or twofold in form, and others say that it is both. Some Brahmanas who know Brahman and perceive the truth believe that it is one; others that it is separate, and yet others that it is manifold." Here we have the seed of all the *Avaidika* and the *Vaidika Darsanas*. I have shown above the crescendo of thought in the six systems or *Darsanas*. *Madhusudana Saraswati* has uttered the same truth. He says in his *Prasthan Bheda*\* that the *Munis*

\* न हि ते मुनिनो भ्रान्ताः सर्वज्ञत्वात्तेषां । किंतु बहिर्विषयप्रवणानामापाततः पुरुषार्थे प्रवेशो न समवतीति नास्तिक्यवारणाय तैः प्रकारभेदाः दर्शिताः । तत्र तेषां तात्पर्यमबुद्ध्या वेदविरुद्धेऽप्यर्थे तात्पर्यमुत्प्रेक्षमाणस्तन्मतमेवोपादेयत्वेन गृह्यन्तो जना नानापथजुषो भवन्तीति सर्वमनवद्यं ॥

(sages) cannot be in error, considering that they are omniscient. The different views have been propounded by them only in order to keep off all nihilistic theories, and because they were afraid that human beings, with their inclinations towards the objects of the world, could not be expected at once to know the true goal of man. Professor Max Muller says : The longer I have studied the various systems, the more have I become impressed with the truth of the view taken by Vijnana Bhikshu and others that there is behind the variety of the six systems a common fund of what may be called national or popular philosophy." The summation of all these views is given in the 23rd verse in Chapter XIII of the Gita :

उपद्रष्टुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन् पुरुषः परः ॥

This verse indicates also the supreme doctrine as given by God.

The Advaita Vedanta of Sankara gives us a complete system which gives full scope for the other systems also. A well-known verse says : विवेकिनः कुतः कोपः स्वदेहावयवेष्विव ॥ (*Naishkarmyasiddhi*). His doctrine of *Paramarthika* and *Vyavaharika* reality enables us to steer clear of all the ancient and terrible intellectual battles about the reality of the universe, the pluralism of souls, the nature of God, and the question as to whether Siva or Vishnu or Devi or some other deity is the Supreme God. No one need be shocked by the doctrine of the formlessness of God any more than he is or need be

shocked by his present experience of the formlessness of his own soul. The Absolute is not an abstraction but is the prius of subject and object. It is the deepest experience of bliss and has called forth rapturous descriptions which no abstraction can ever evoke. So long as the principle of individuation (*Jivabhāva*) subsists, the world is real and God is the Supreme Reality of Love, Beauty and Bliss. But the Upanishads and the Gita affirm the Advaita Anubhava. The highest western philosophy has affirmed the Absolute. Tennyson describes the experience when he says :

"The mortal limit of the Self was  
loosed  
And passed into the Nameless, as  
a cloud  
Melts into Heaven. I touched  
my limbs—the limbs  
Were not mine,—and yet no  
shade of doubt  
But utter clearness, and through  
loss of Self  
The gain of such large life as,  
matched with ours,  
Were sun to spark—unshadow-  
able in words,  
Themselves but shadows of a  
shadow-world."

### Must Meet New Forces

We have to realise that India is vibrant today with a new passion for social unity and political freedom. Though Indian metaphysics deals with the problems of all time, it must meet the new forces of modern science and modern democracy and Indian nationalism. It



must show that it is not, and cannot be, negated by modern science. It cannot afford to fold its robe about itself, scornful of science. Truth is one and there cannot be divided sovereignties in its domain. Hence Indian metaphysics must meet in a vital way the new passion for science. It must be able to meet in a vital way the new passion for equality and freedom surging throughout the modern world. It must meet in a vital way the new passion for unity and liberty that is especially surging throughout India. Such an integration is necessary in its interests, in the interests of India and the world, nay, in the interests of Truth for all time. If it does not, science and modernity and India will go their ways leaving Indian metaphysics to die in splendid and neglected isolation and inanity. It must point heavenward the eyes of man now gloating over the beauty

and joy of the earth. It must do this by leading the spirit of man to that noumenal Reality in the realisation of which lies infinite and eternal bliss. It must substitute desire by Dharma and lead to purity of mind and thence to meditation and devotion and wisdom, and thence to the highest realisation. It must not forget the base of morality and social service in its contemplation of the apex of spiritual bliss. It must boldly affirm that there cannot be any Eternal Hell, and that all are eligible for salvation. It must teach the way of *Yoga* to the modern man wandering in the gardens of Kama (desire), so that he might rise from plane to plane of spiritual realisation, loving and saving the world and not, as he is doing now, kissing it with the kiss of death. It must, in short, meet the present vitally and bring in the greater and happier future to be. Will it or will it not?

## THE PRAYER OF THE PRACHETAS

*(Adapted from the Bhagavatam)*

*By Swami Prabhavananda*

E bow down to Thee, O Lord.  
 Thou dost charm away  
 Life's long dream of sorrow.  
 With Thy Holy Name on the lips,  
 Meditating upon Thy divine attri-  
 butes  
 Within the heart,  
 One walks Thy Blessed Path.  
 Thou art beyond the reach of the  
 mind,

Words cannot express Thee.  
The way of the senses is not Thy way.  
Blessed are they who know Thy pure blissful Self  
For they shall be free from the bondage of the world.  
We bow down to Thee.  
Thou art the Lord of Love,  
The Lord of Thy devotees,

Thou dost deliver us from all evil.  
 Blessed are those who know Thee  
   as their very own  
 For they shall find peace.

Thou art the innermost Self of all,  
 Thou knowest our heart's desires.  
 May we realise Thy love.  
 Thou art limitless and Thy glories  
   also.

For Thou art Infinite.

If by reason of Karma  
 We go through rounds of birth and  
   death,

May we in every life always have  
 Association with Thy devotees.  
 That we deem the greatest blessing.  
 Thy devotees, the free souls, always  
   speak Thy Word.  
 They look with an equal eye upon  
   all.

Free from all attachment,  
 Their minds are united in Thee.  
 They make this earth blessed by  
   their living.

They are the embodiment of purity.  
 The least association with them  
 Frees men from great terror.

Thou art indeed the Great Healer,  
 The healer of worldliness and  
   death,

The giver of Eternal Life and  
   Blessedness.

Who can sing Thy Infinite Glory?  
 Thou art all and everywhere,  
 We bow down to Thee again and  
   again.

—Thus having praised the glory  
 of the Infinite Lord, the Prachetas  
 realised greater peace within their  
 hearts.

After many fruitful years of acti-  
 vity in the world, they assumed the

lives of Sannyasins to attain the  
 highest knowledge, the knowledge  
 of the One Divine Self in all beings  
 and things.

They retired to a place of solitude,  
 and began to practise meditation  
 upon the Absolute Brahman. One  
 day as they were seated for medita-  
 tion, Narada, the great teacher ap-  
 proached them. The Prachetas  
 welcomed him with great reverence,  
 beseeching him to teach them the  
 highest truth, the truth that would  
 make them free.

So Narada, uniting his heart in  
 God, began :

“ O Princes, blessed indeed is  
 that birth, glorious indeed is that  
 deed, true indeed is that life, lumin-  
 ous indeed is that mind and fruitful  
 indeed is that word, which is con-  
 secrated to the loving service of God,  
 the Self of the universe.

Man is born thrice : first he is  
 born of parents ; his next birth is  
 baptism and his third birth is initia-  
 tion. But all these births are indeed  
 vain, if his life is not dedicated to  
 the loving service of God.

Vain also are so called virtuous  
 deeds and vain is our long life, if  
 we live not in the service of God.

Love and Service,—these are the  
 greatest ends of all the Vedas,  
 all austerity, all learning and all  
 science.

Useless and futile indeed are Yoga  
 or Sannyas, scriptural study or  
 virtuous deeds, if one has not love  
 for God in his heart.

Of all that exist, the Self is the  
 dearest. The Lord of love is our

very Self. Who then can be dearer than God?

As when water is poured at the root of a tree its branches are nourished, as when food is eaten the senses are strengthened, similarly when the Lord of the universe is loved and worshipped, the whole universe rejoices.

So, Oh Princes, worship Him within your hearts as one with the Self. He is the Self of all embodied beings. He is the Supreme,—the Lord of the universe.

Love and charity toward all beings, contentment under all circumstances and the control of all senses and passions,—such is the way to the service of God. The practice of these virtues pleases the Lord.

The Lord is ever manifest in the pure hearts of His devotees."

Thus taught by Narada, the Prachetas united their hearts and minds with the Lord of Love and realised their unity with Him.

## PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH IN THE WORLD OF MODERN THOUGHT\*

*By Swami Bhutesananda*  
(An Appreciation)

### Need for Harmonisation with Science

A highly admirable enterprise as the present volume is, it is sure to awaken living interest in the hearts of those thinkers who hold religions in great esteem and are endeavouring to find for them a fitting place by the side of other universally recognised values of life. The author is an eminent scholar, vitally concerned with the subject of rational religion, not merely as a professional speculator but also as one of its ardent votaries. The present work has been inspired by his ambition to critically build up a universally acceptable system of theology which will be in perfect accord with the results of the sciences, the metaphysical inferences

derivable from all acknowledged values of life and scientifically verifiable elements of all experimental religions.

### Comparative Study and Discrimination

The author is well aware of the enormous difficulties that stand in the way. The kaleidoscopic variety of religious beliefs held by millions of people following different traditional authorities and identifying themselves with different national, racial and social groups, makes a seeker after universality in religion lose himself helplessly in utter confusion. Nonetheless universal validity is an indispensable requirement for religion, if it is to logically maintain its ground for all times. Variety in the rituals, historic traditions and

\* *Pilgrimage of Faith in the World of Modern Thought*: (Mainly) the Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lectures in Comparative Religion delivered by Douglas Clyde Macintosh before the University of Calcutta. Published by the University of Calcutta.

imaginative elements in different religions are not to be done away with. But universal agreement must be reached regarding the fundamental points. The best method for achieving this end, our author suggests, is sympathetic and, at the same time, scientific self-criticism in order to discriminate the essential from the non-essential, and along with it, an unbiased comparative study of all religions.

Even persons gifted with rare intellectual acumen are often found to be but blind followers of their respective traditions inherited from their family surroundings. Sacred scriptures and their authoritative interpreters are generally accepted quite uncritically as final authorities, more or less in all religions. The author invites the votaries of all faiths to work unitedly to deliver humanity from the prison-house of traditionalism, but wisely enough hastens to add, in the best interests of religion, "Let us break definitively, then, not indeed with all tradition, but with traditionalism."

### **Rebel Movements also Bound**

Consistently with his method of self-criticism the author exposes mercilessly the glaring inconsistencies and absurd superstitions taught in the so-called infallible Bible, and naively accepted by the majority of Christians. This, of course, is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone. Traditionalism holds its sway with more or less rigidity in all faiths. It is curious to note that even such recent movements as Mormonism and Christian Science, Bahaim and

Theosophy, that are the products of rebellion against traditionalism, are by no means wholly free from this intellectual servitude.

### **Achievements of Each critically weighed**

If then we are to shake off once for all the pernicious fetters of traditionalism, what must we fall back upon in our pursuit after the essential truths in the field of religion? Here the author first passes in review the relevant records of the achievements that have already been made by independent investigators in the domain of philosophy. He then points out, the partial inadequacy of their methods and the unsatisfactory nature of their conclusions, judged from the religious point of view. But despite all their imperfections, the author does not at all underrate the important truths that he has learnt from them,—the invaluable suggestions that have enabled him to arrive at conclusions which are quite satisfactory and entirely in keeping with his religious aspirations. We shall briefly refer here to our author's estimate of the different systems of thought built independently on rational grounds.

### **Empiricism**

In spite of the dangerous leanings towards subjectivism on the one hand and radical scepticism on the other, Empiricism has been our most powerful ally in the crusade against traditionalism. It has implanted in us the scientific attitude which never allows us naively to accept anything from whatever source it may happen to come. We

have moreover learnt to employ the empirical method in theology, *i. e.*, to seek scientific verification of the hypotheses of faith in religious experience.

Kant's critical philosophy has been extremely disappointing as regards the knowability of religious truths. The sledge-hammer of pure reason has pulled to the ground, brick by brick, the whole edifice of metaphysics. Nothing can be known beyond the flitting phenomena. The *noumenon* will ever remain unknown and unknowable. Nevertheless, the Prussian thinker, a veteran agnostic though he was, has founded religion on the solid rock of morality. From the moral need of human nature he has drawn conclusions which will ever retain their supreme importance in the field of religion. Mention may be made of the following as examples. God is the moral law-giver; dictates of conscience are the commands of God; man is the absolutely free agent; salvation of man is his deliverance from moral evil; eternal existence of individual souls is a necessary requirement for infinite moral progress; and so on.

### Rationalism

Rational idealism has been discussed at great length in its various phases. The author has attempted to show the logical fallacies that are involved in the arguments usually advanced in its support. Its ontological conclusions, pantheism and absolutism, are an offence to our moral and religious consciousness. But despite all his dissatisfaction

with regard to the conclusions of rationalism, the author has not overlooked its salutary contributions. Rationalism has brought into lime-light the importance of the philosophical background of religion, rationality as a test of philosophical truth, a unitary view of reality, immanence of the Divine in nature and in man, and so on.

### Pragmatism

An honest inquirer into the ultimate nature of things becomes oftentimes baffled in his attempt. His earnest endeavour to establish a satisfactory mental adjustment through the current systems of thought meets with repeated failures and disappointments. Finally he cannot but fall back upon pragmatism. Whatever works, a pragmatist declares boldly, is true. If God, immortality and other items of faith work satisfactorily by bringing peace of mind, they must be adhered to, however inconsistent or unprovable such beliefs may appear to be, judged from the intellectual point of view. There is some grain of truth in this attitude, no doubt. Nevertheless it tends to defend in its reactionary form the old traditionalism in toto. Rationally a practical religious man may not be able to justify his dogmatic faith. But, a pragmatist will argue, he has his peace of mind secured, so long as he is a believer rather than a thinker. Why then should he not continue to cherish the the self-same beliefs as though they were true? There may not be a God—and certainly there is no such entity as the majority of psycholo-

gists opine—other than a “wish-being”, a projection from the sub-conscious; but albeit, we shall continue to retain the term God and the idea of it as if there were some reality corresponding to them.

There can be nothing more disastrous than this conclusion of the radical pragmatists with regard to the truth-value of religious experiences. Sincerely religious souls are painfully aware of these unsatisfactory results of the metaphysical inquiries and some of them are of opinion that religion must be dissociated from intellectuality altogether. They would rather appeal straight to the heart and ignore the head completely. This attitude of sentimentalism, originated as it is from a deep sense of despondence, evokes our sympathy no doubt, but can never be justified as a sound policy. Religion, to be of any worth at all, must be founded on the solid basis of a rational metaphysic. Our quest for a wholly reliable basis for religion, although unsuccessful so far, is sure to yield satisfactory results, only if we proceed on with more caution.

### **Combine Representational Pragmatism and Moral Optimism**

Pragmatism, as a reactionary attitude that denies ultimate truths altogether and reduces truth to the mere test of truth, *viz.*, workability, is no doubt wholly untenable. But if properly modified into what is called the representational form, our author thinks, it will be of immense help in the field of religion.

According to representational pragmatism, whatever works satisfactorily represents truth which may not be directly experienced otherwise. Thus scientific religious adjustment proves the truth of religion to the extent it works satisfactorily. Along with this representational pragmatism should be cherished, our author suggests, in the best interests of religion, moral optimism or the belief that if free human beings make due endeavour the whole world will become better and better day by day morally and spiritually.

Though the author, in agreement with Kant, bases religion entirely on moral grounds, he believes at the same time that religion is not merely a means but an end in itself, inasmuch as it has got a value characteristically its own, which is fundamentally different from moral values. This he calls by the term “divinity” or “holiness,” as Dr. Otto puts it.

### **God and the God-idea Distinct**

The metaphysic that is to be the basis of the universal religion of the future will recommend, our author contends, critical monism or religious realism, accepting God as ontologically different from the God-idea. The idea only represents certain aspects of the Divine Reality and guides our right adjustment to It, but can never be equated with the Reality Itself. This satisfactory theory follows from moral optimism and the logical inferences deducible from them, *viz.*, free human agency, “conservation of the values of the

individual moral personality," existence of God, the preserver of human values and the controller "of the course of events in nature and in history," communion with God, and so forth.

### Characteristics Needed

Finally the author lays down the characteristic features of the universal religion as follows :

(i) It must appreciate, and be conducive to, universally valid values, such as Truth or rationality, true and rational Beauty, moral Goodness, and unselfish Love and Holiness.

(ii) It must be scientific. That is to say, it must not contradict scientific knowledge of the world ; it must be guided by scientific religious adjustment and lead to scientific knowledge of God of experimental religion—of His existence and nature.

(iii) It must provide for the creative freedom, the conservation of the eternal values of human personality, and the existence of a Cosmic God satisfying our religious needs.

(iv) It must develop a rational and universally valid religious philosophy.

(v) In order to maintain its vitality and efficiency it must make use of such ideas as are in agreement with its doctrines, and psychologically dynamic because of their appeal to the imagination and the heart. The picture of Jesus, our author thinks, can be of immense value in this respect. But Jesus should be looked upon not merely as the Son of God or an incarnation of God. For our greatest spiritual benefit, He should also be accepted as an ideal, a Guru, a spiritually and morally perfect being guiding other souls towards perfection through the example of His own life.

### Contributions of East and West

The author thinks the East and West have got special contributions to make to the world-religion. "Moral optimism seems to be a contribution rather distinctive of the dynamic West. The immanence of God is the characteristic offering of the thoughtful East." Finally the conclusion ends with the author's suggestion of the formation of a "League of Religions" and an international and inter-religious organisation for mutual understanding and utilising the "spiritual dynamic of religion in the interests of" humanity.

*(To be concluded with a few critical remarks)*

## TRISHODADHI OR THE STORY OF A TAPASWI'S FALL\*

*By Kaundinya*

*(Continued from previous issue)*

### **Curse and Absolution**

**T**HE elephant stationed himself near the Pippala and said, "Oh Holy Tree, long ago when I fell into this form by reason of a curse pronounced upon me for a sin, this meeting with thyself was fixed as the termination of the curse. I have wandered up and down for long asking every Pippala that I saw the very question that never received an answer till this moment. Now listen ; and so at last I shall again become a man, as soon as I have told thee of my crime, since this is the condition of the fulfilment and abolition of the curse.

"Oh Pippala, long ago in my former birth, I was a king named Ruru, and I had for my minister a Brahmin named Trishodadhi. He had an incomparable wife by name Watsatari, a very paragon of beauty and devotion to her husband. It was her virtue that was the cause of my falling into the body of an elephant by reason of a curse."

### **Curiosity Replacing Concentration**

As he spoke, the heart of Trishodadhi almost jumped from his body in amazement, and like a flash of lightning he flew back into the past and murmured to himself, "Ah ! What ? Was she then after

all not guilty, but, as he says, virtuous ?" And utterly forgetting all, he let his rosary suddenly drop out of his hand ; and turned sharply round to see as well as hear. And when he looked, he saw the elephant standing still with drooping ears leaning against the Pippala trunk. And as the Brahmin sat listening, the Pippala said, "Oh king of elephants, why after beginning thy narration, hast thou suddenly broken off ?"

Then the elephant sighed deeply and said, "Holy Tree, I stopped, as it were, against my will at the thought of her innocence and my own perfidy and the terrible retribution that overtook me in the shape of this curse. Oh Pippala, I was married in my youth to a queen with beauty that resembled the beauty of a panther ; for it was fierce and spotted and treacherous and crafty. I was a prey to it, for I was young, and knew nothing of the ways of the world. But one evening, I detected her treachery and the shock was so unbearable that I rushed out and kept wandering up and down the streets in the darkness of the night, aimlessly. There I came across a miserable wretch to whom I gave my costly robes in exchange for

---

\* Based on F. W. Eain's translation from the original Sanskrit.



his loathsome rags. I then said to myself, 'Now I will leave my palace and my kingdom and become a Sannyasin, turning my back upon the world!' But almost as I spoke, a little, old Sadhu came suddenly upon me and eyeing me narrowly for a while, he said, 'Thou art young and handsome. And whence comes the trouble of the young but from love? Fool, art thou actually grieving for the loss of a woman? Dost thou not know that he who loses one, can find a hundred others just as good or even better?' 'I am obliged to thee,' I exclaimed, 'and like a good physician thou hast cured me of my malady.' I said to myself, 'I should have been a fool indeed to become a Sannyasin for such a thing as she!' I then entered the palace with the solemn determination to make all other women in the three worlds pay for the conduct of my life. And Oh Pippala, as I said, so I did.

### Story of First Meeting

"One day returning weary after a hunt in the forest, I dismissed my attendants and came slowly home alone on foot. As I rambled on, it happened as if by destiny's decree that a necklace of great pearls that I always wore on my neck slipped off and fell upon the ground. A hawk suddenly pounced upon it and carried it away attracted by its glitter. I ran after the bird which, in fear, dropped the necklace from his claws and flew away. Seeing it fall I ran towards it, but I found my way blocked by a high wall on

the farther side of which the necklace fell. I looked about and seeing a tree standing near, I swung myself up by means of its branches upon the wall and looked over. And when I did so, there, below in the garden stood a young woman, looking up towards me; and on the ground was the necklace, lying at her very feet. She asked, 'Who art thou, if, as I guess, thou hast climbed upon the wall; and what is thy business?' And I said with confusion and surprise, 'I came upon the wall, O lady of the lovely eyes, to recover yonder necklace which is lying at thy feet.' Then she said, 'Dost thou see it lying?' I said, 'Surely, I see it very plainly as thou dost also.' Then she said, 'Come down and take it and begone. For I cannot do it for thee, since I am blind.' "

And Trishodadhi, as he listened, groaned within himself and murmured, "Aye, indeed, alas! So she was, and these were her very eyes. Now I see that the story of this elephant is true."

### Curiosity Further Aroused

The elephant continued: 'Blind! Surely thou art jesting,' said I. She said, 'Since thy business is neither with my eyes nor with me at all, but rather with thy necklace, come, take it quickly and begone; and cease talking nonsense on the wall.' And I said to her aloud, 'Since then I must, and thou permittest, I will descend and take the necklace and begone.' And I leaped from the wall falling heavily beside her, bruising my foot. I then said, 'Let

me rest for a moment; and I will depart.' She hesitated and said with indecision, 'This is a misfortune and a difficulty. For I know thee not, and I dare not stay beside thee, not knowing who thou art. And yet if thy voice is any indication of thy quality and rank, I think I need not fear thee.' I said hastily, 'Fear absolutely nothing, and I will tell thee my family and name in exchange for thy own.' Then she said, 'I am called Watsatari, and my husband is the minister of the king of whom doubtless thou hast heard.' And I started and exclaimed, 'What! The wife of Trishodadhi!' Then she said, 'I see you know.' And I said again, 'What, can it be Trishodadhi?' And as I spoke, I looked at her in dismay murmuring to myself, 'Alas, alas. Had she only been the wife of any other husband in the three wide worlds, only not of *him*!'

And Trishodadhi, as he listened, exclaimed within himself, "Ah, indeed, you are right." And he listened in agitation to the continuation of the tale.

### **Watsatari's Innocence Shown**

The elephant continued: "When she heard my exclamation, she said, 'Who art thou to be so well acquainted, as it seems thou art, both with my husband and with myself?' I said in reply, 'I am the confidential agent of a neighbouring king, to whom thy husband lately rendered an inestimable service. And since he absolutely refused reward, the king, my master, said to

me: Since I may do nothing for Trishodadhi, I will do something at least for his wife. For I have heard that she is of incomparable beauty. Take then this necklace, go to the capital of Ruru, seek his minister and ask for Watsatari, his wife; and when she is actually before thee, put with thy own hands the necklace on her neck and say: This is the humble token of king Chandradatta's gratefulness for her husband's service.'

"She listened attentively and asked, 'Where then is the necklace?' And I placed it in the delicate hand she held towards me. She took it and felt it all over, telling every pearl. And she said, 'Surely these pearls are very large. Their beauty is for other eyes than mine.' And all at once, *half in derision, as I conjectured*, she took the necklace by both ends in her hands and hung it up around her neck. Instantly I forgot my self-control, and before she could prevent me, I made a move as if to clasp the two ends of the necklace behind her. I looked; lo! there at a distance in the garden stood Trishodadhi, her husband, looking at me with eyes that resembled caverns filled with black and shining water."

And Trishodadhi, as he listened, groaned eager to listen to the rest of the tale.

The elephant continued: And all at once he turned and went away without looking round. And at that very instant, Watsatari, all ignorant of her husband's presence

or his going away, pushed me suddenly with great force. I saw an angry flush upon her face; and standing like a queen that shook with indignation, she said 'Wretch, how darest thou take such cowardly advantage of my incapacity? Get thee gone! And removing the necklace from her neck, she threw it violently away, not caring where it fell. In utter confusion and agitation, I scaled over the wall and hastened home. Reaching my palace, I hastily sent for Trishodadhi, but my messengers returned saying that he was nowhere to be found. In the meantime, Watsatari evidently found out who I was, and when I repeated my visits and pleaded for her love, I was repulsed with contempt.

### Further Trapped

And Trishodadhi, as he listened, said softly to himself, "Out upon the husband who could doubt her, even in a dream!" And oblivious of his Tapas he listened on!

The elephant continued: I cried, 'Oh alas, alas, fie upon the husband who is my ruin and despair! And after all, what is this husband? Is he a husband who goes away and neglects thee like this?' She said, 'If he is really dead, it is my duty to follow him through the fire.'

And Trishodadhi, as he listened, said within himself, "Little does this elephant imagine who it is that sits and listens to him now."

### The Climax

The elephant continued: She said, 'Oh king Ruru, thou seest

it is useless. Cease then thy pleading and persuasion and go away.' The more I was repulsed, the more intent did I become to gain her and used every artifice that I was capable of. One day, I scaled over the wall of her compound and hastily went towards her and said, 'Watsatari, thy husband has returned, for I have found him. And now I have him in my palace; and his life is in thy hands and mine. I have come myself with an escort to bring thee to him.' She sighed and said, 'How can I believe thee who hast lied to me so often and whose purpose I know only too well? And yet how can I resist one who can so easily effect by violence the end at which he aims, if I refuse? And yet I fear for my husband. Wilt thou swear thou wilt take me to him?'

And Trishodadhi murmured to himself, "Ah, liar, thou could'st prevail on her virtue only by making use of me against myself!"

The elephant went on: At last she consented to accompany me and said in a low voice, 'May my husband forgive me if my better judgment is in error overlooking my own danger for his sake.' I carried her away quickly to my palace, while all the time she lay as if her own soul had, abandoning its body, stayed behind her in the garden refusing to be a traitor to its trust.

### Overwhelmed

Trishodadhi all at once rose to his feet and looked towards the

elephant; and lo! like a flash of lightning, the elephant suddenly disappeared and in his place he saw no elephant but king Ruru who exclaimed in delight, 'Ha, my story is concluded and the curse is ended! And I have escaped from the terrible body of an elephant to regain my own proper form of a man!' And as Trishodadhi looked towards him almost abandoning the body for the wonder of the thing he saw, all at once his eyes started from his head and every hair on his body stood erect. For, there close beside the Pippala tree, stood Watsatari herself, and her great eyes turned full upon Trishodadhi. And at that moment king Ruru shouted in amazement and intoxication, 'Watsatari, what? Have I regained thee also in addition to my life?'

As he listened, all at once, the heart of Trishodadhi bounded in his heart like a deer; and every vestige of his Tapasya vanished from his soul like a dream. He ran with feet that resembled wings straight towards them in agony and despair, not knowing what he said. "Ha! She is mine! Robber of a king, she is not thine!" He ran between them exclaiming to Wat-

satari, "Noble wife, forgive me, for I did not know!"

### Chastening of Outlook

A peal of laughter rang in his face, and as he drew back in amazement he looked and lo! it was not Watsatari, but another, a stranger to him!—Kalānidhi!

Ruru also disappeared, and in his place stood Indra in the guise of a devotee, who addressed him and said, "Trishodadhi, the wise strive for wisdom and gain at least humility; but thine was a false devotion and could not stand the test. The mountain of merit had an existence only in thy imagination. Regret for objects of sense-pleasure was not extinct in thee; and the sparks of vanity, egoism and attachment to woman lay lurking under the white ashes of thy austerity, needing only a little breeze of recollection to fan them into flame. Aim not at heaping up a mountain of merit; for true devotion grows not where such motives exist. Love the Lord and yearn for His Grace alone. And to make thyself fit for it, try sincerely to effect a "release" from those emotions of joy and sorrow, mundane things were wont to awaken in thee in days gone by."

(Concluded)

---

# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

All things seen in a dream are unreal, as they all appear inside the body. How can objects appear (in their natural state) when confined in such a small space? (33)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

This and the following verses are intended to amplify what has been said in verse 25.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

Going (in no time) to a distant place and seeing objects there (are not possible in the waking state, as the time is so limited, but are possible in dream) where one is not limited by time (or space). On waking, the dreamer does not find himself in the place in which he dreamed himself to be. (34)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

In the waking state, the times for going to and coming from, are limited by the distance to the country (to which we may wish to go). As there is no such limit in a dream, it is to be understood that there is no actual going to a (distant) country.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

On waking, one does not see any of his friends with whom he may have been conversing (during dream). Also, on waking, he does not find with him anything that he may have acquired (in the dream). (35)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

(On waking) he does not see any friends and others with whom he may have been conversing during his dream. Also any gold, etc., he may have acquired during dream, is not found with him, when awake. Therefore there is no actual going to another country during dream.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

The body active in a dream is unreal, as one quite apart from that, is seen to be (sleeping). Like the body, everything else (seen in a dream) is unreal, being a mere appearance presented to the mind. (36)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The body seen to be moving about in a dream is unreal, as another body, quite apart from it, is seen to be resting in bed. Just as the body seen in a dream is unreal, so also everything presented to the mind is unreal. Similarly also, in the waking state, all the appearances presented to the mind (are unreal). The aim of this section is to show that waking experiences are on the same level of unreality as those of the dream.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

As (most of) the objects seen in the waking world are also seen in the dream, the former is spoken of as the cause of the latter. For that reason, to the dreamer, the waking world becomes real relatively. (37)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The unreality of waking experience is explained. As the experience of the

dreamer is similar to his own experience when awake, consisting of a perceiver, the object perceived and the act of perception, the experience of the dream is said to be the effect of waking experience. For the reason that the dream is the effect of waking, the waking experience is said to be real from the point of view of the dream. There is nothing else. The meaning is that the waking is as real as a dream. Just as to the dreamer, the phenomena of dream appear as real as the objects of ordinary experience (of course, while in the dreaming state), the existing objects of waking experience, being (supposed to be) the causes of dream experience, appear to be real to the person in the waking state. The meaning is that the objects of wakeful experience have no more reality than those of a dream.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The fact of experience not confirming the birth of anything, points to the non-production of everything. The production of the unreal from the real, is never found anywhere. (38)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

It may be objected that the waking world, though the cause of the dream, is not unreal like dream. Dream is very transitory but the waking world is seen to be permanent. (To this we reply) It may be so to the unenlightened. The enlightened people do not recognise the birth of anything. As it is not in conformity with experience, to them, all is Atman unborn, as described in Vedantic works. "It is without and within, unborn". If you think that from Atman in the waking state, the unreal dream arises, we say, no. It is against worldly experience, that anything real gives rise to an unreal non-entity. For, the production of an unreal

non-entity like the horns of a hare, is never seen anywhere.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Constantly seeing the unreal (appearance) in the waking state the dreamer sees similar appearances, permeated by unreality. The unreal things seen in the dream, are not seen by the one awakened (from sleep). (39)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

(It may be objected :) You yourself said that the dream is the effect of the waking experience. Then how can you now assert that the birth (of anything) is not confirmed by experience? To this we reply. Listen, how the law of effect and cause is to be understood there. Seeing in the waking state, non-existing unreal things, like a snake superimposed on a rope, the same person in the dream superimposes (on himself) phenomena similar to those of the waking state and characterised by the perceiver, the object of perception and the act of perception. But on waking from sleep, he does not see the same unreal and fictitious objects of dream. Similarly, all the objects experienced in the waking condition are not always seen in the dream. Therefore, it is (from the worldly or Vyavaharic point of view) that the waking world is spoken of as the cause of the dream and not from the point of view of Absolute Reality.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The unreal cannot have the unreal as its cause: nor can the real have the unreal as its cause. The real cannot have the real as its cause. How then, could the real be the cause of the unreal? (40)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

(Considered) from the point of view of Reality, there can be no relation of

effect and cause at any time and in any manner whatever. (If you ask) how? (we reply). An unreal (non-existing) thing like the horns of a hare, can never be the cause of the unreal flower in the sky. So an unreal is not known to be the cause of an unreal (thing). An existing thing, like a jar, cannot be the cause of non-existent horns of a hare. Also, a real object like a jar, cannot give rise to another real object (such as a jar, a piece of cloth etc). How can an unreal (non-existing) thing be the effect of a real thing? No other relation of cause and effect (beyond the four dealt with) exists or can be thought of. Therefore, to the enlightened persons, the relation of cause and effect does not exist at all.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Through wrong knowledge, during the waking state, things beyond

the region of thought are felt as real. Similarly, through wrong knowledge, objects are seen peculiar to that state. (41)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

This is said again to show that there is not the least tinge of relation of effect and cause between the unreal worlds of waking and dream. Through wrong knowledge, which is due to want of discrimination, objects of the waking world which are beyond the reach of thought and experience, like the snake superimposed on a rope, are considered to be and even felt to be real. Similarly in dream, objects such as an elephant etc, are through false knowledge superimposed on himself. The objects of the dream are peculiar to the state only and do not stand in the relation of effects produced from the percepts of the waking state.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Honest Pictures of Indian Life**

WE have much pleasure in extracting the following account of Master Mahasaya given by Mr. Paul Brunton in his book, "A Search in Secret India", published recently by Messrs. Rider & Co. The author's visit to the well-known writer of "The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna" has given us a charming portrayal of the sage in his residence. The refreshingly sincere and honest pictures of Indian life the author paints, mark him out to be a genuine student of the precious elements of Indian culture; and in this book we have an earnest of what true understanding and sympathy, unwarped through prejudice, can achieve. As we review the book in a subsequent issue, we expect to give more of Mr. Brunton's

impressions. Meanwhile, we are happy to introduce to our readers this friend of India through the following excerpts from his very interesting book :

### **From Lawyer to the Master**

UT in the onward-rushing train I have picked up another thread of guidance in this quest. Like most main-line trains in India, it is packed to the point of fullness. The compartment in which I have been fortunate enough to find a berth—for all trains carry sleeping berths, except in the lowest class—contains a mixed crew. They discuss their affairs so openly that soon one learns who and what they are. There is a venerable son of Islam who is attired in the long, black silk coat, which is buttoned

around his neck. A round black cap, neatly embroidered in gold, rests on his thinly thatched head. White Pyjama trousers are gathered around his legs, while his shoes provide an artistic finish to his dress, for they are daintily made with red and green threadwork. There is a beetle-browed Mahratti from Western India; a gold-turbaned Marwari who, like many members of his race, is a money-lender; and a stout Brahmin lawyer from the South. They are all men of some wealth for they are attended by personal servants who dart out of their third-class carriages at most stopping-places, to inquire after their masters' welfare.

The Muhammadan gives me a single glance, closes his eyes, and drifts off into vacuous sleep. The Mahratti busies himself in conversation with the Marwari. The Brahmin has recently entered the train; he has yet to settle down.

I am in one of my talkative moods, but there is no one to whom I can talk. The invisible barrier between West and East seems to divide me from all the others. I feel cheered, therefore, when the rubicund Brahmin pulls out a book whose English title, *Life of Ramakrishna*, I cannot help seeing, so boldly is it printed upon the cover. I seize the bait and bring him into conversation. Has not some one once told me that Ramakrishna was the last of the Rishees, those spiritual supermen? Upon this point I engage my fellow-traveller, and he is eager to respond. We ascend the heights of philosophical discussion and descend into talk on the homelier aspects of Indian life.

Whenever he mentions the name of the Rishee, his voice fills with love and awe and his eyes

light up. The reality of his devotion to this long-passed man is indubitable. Within two hours I learn that the Brahmin has a master who is one of the two or three surviving disciples of the great Ramakrishna himself. This master of his is nearly eighty years old and lives, not in some lonely retreat, but in the heart of Calcutta's Indian quarter.

Of course, I beg for the address and it is freely given.

"You will need no introduction other than your desire to see him," says the lawyer. \* \* \*

### At His Residence

And so I am now in Calcutta itself, searching for the house of the Master Mahasaya, the aged disciple of Ramakrishna.

Passing through an open courtyard which adjoins the street, I reach a steep flight of steps leading into a large, rambling old house. I climb up a dark stairway and pass through a low door on the top storey. I find myself in a small room, which opens out on to the flat, terraced roof of the house. Two of its walls are lined with low divans. Save for the lamp and a small pile of books and papers, the room is otherwise bare. A young man enters and bids me wait for the coming of his master, who is on a lower floor.

Ten minutes pass. I hear the sound of someone stirring from a room on the floor below out into the stairway. Immediately there is a tingling sensation in my head and the idea suddenly grips me that the man downstairs has fixed his thoughts upon me. I hear the man's footsteps going up the stairs. When at last—for he moves with extreme slowness—he enters the room, I need no one to announce his name. A venerable patriarch has stepped from the pages of the Bible,



and a figure from Mosaic times has turned to flesh. This man with bald head, long white beard, and white moustache, grave countenance, and large, reflective eyes; this man whose shoulders are slightly bent with the burden of nearly eighty years of mundane existence, can be none other than the Master Mahasaya.

### Dignified Welcome

He takes his seat on a divan and then turns his face towards mine. In that grave, sober presence I realise instantly that there can be no light persiflage, no bandying of wit or humour, no utterance even of the harsh cynicism and dark scepticism which overshadow my soul from time to time. His character, with its commingling of perfect faith in God and nobility of conduct, is written in his appearance for all to see.

He addresses me in perfectly accented English.

"You are welcome here."

He bids me come closer and take my seat on the same divan. He holds my hand for a few moments. I deem it expedient to introduce myself and explain the object of my visit. When I have concluded speaking, he presses my hand again in a kindly manner and says :

"It is a higher power which has stirred you to come to India and which is bringing you in contact with the holy men of our land. There is a real purpose behind that, and the future will surely reveal it. Await it patiently."

"Will you tell me something about your Master Ramakrishna?"

### Transforming Influence

"Ah, now you raise a subject about which I love best to talk. It is nearly half a century since he left us, but his blessed memory can never leave me; always it remains

fresh and fragrant in my heart. I was twenty-seven when I met him and was constantly in his society for the last five years of his life. The result was that I became a changed man; my whole attitude towards life was reversed. Such was the strange influence of this godman Ramakrishna. He threw a spiritual spell upon all who visited him. He literally charmed them, fascinated them. Even materialistic persons who came to scoff became dumb in his presence."

"But how can such persons feel reverence for spirituality—a quality in which they do not believe?" I interpose slightly puzzled.

The corners of Mahasaya's mouth pull up in a half smile. He answers :

"Two persons taste red pepper. One does not know its name; perhaps he has never even seen it before. The other is well acquainted with it and recognizes it immediately. Will it not taste the same to both? Will not both of them have a burning sensation on the tongue? In the same way, ignorance of Ramakrishna's spiritual greatness did not debar materialistic persons from 'tasting' the radiant influence of spirituality which emanated from him."

"Then he really was a spiritual superman?"

### Spiritual Power Unique

"Yes, and in my belief even more than that. Ramakrishna was a simple man, illiterate and uneducated—he was so illiterate that he could not even sign his name, let alone write a letter. He was humble in appearance and humbler still in mode of living, yet he commanded the allegiance of some of the best educated and most cultured men of the time in India. They had to bow before his tremendous spiri-

tuality which was so real that it could be felt. He taught us that pride, riches, wealth, worldly honours, wordly position are trivialities in comparison with that spirituality, are fleeting illusions which deceive men. Ah, those were wonderful days! Often he would pass into trances of so palpably divine a nature that we who were gathered around him then would feel that he was a god, rather than a man. Strangely, too, he possessed the power of inducing a similar state in his disciples by means of a single touch; in this state they could understand the deep mysteries of God by means of direct perception. But let me tell you how he affected me.

### Lured like the Peacock

"I had been educated along Western lines. My head was filled with intellectual pride. I had served in Calcutta colleges as Professor of English Literature, History and Political Economy at different times. Ramakrishna was living in the temple of Dakshineswar, which is only a few miles up the river from Calcutta. There I found him one unforgettable spring day and listened to his simple expression of spiritual ideas born of his own experience. I made a feeble attempt to argue with him but soon became tongue-tied in that sacred presence, whose effect on me was too deep for words. Again and again I visited him, unable to stay away from this poor, humble but divine person, until Ramakrishna one day humorously remarked:

"A peacock was given a dose of opium at four o'clock. The next day it appeared again exactly at that hour. It was under the spell of opium and came for another dose.'

"That was true symbolically speaking. I had never enjoyed

such blissful experiences as when I was in the presence of Ramakrishna, so can you wonder why I came again and again? And so I became one of his group of intimate disciples, as distinguished from merely occasional visitors. One day the Master said to me:

### Example of the Tortoise

"I can see from the signs of your eyes, brow and face that you are a Yogi. Do all your work then, but keep your mind on God. Wife, children, father and mother, live with all and serve them as if they are your own. The tortoise swims about in the waters of the lake, but her mind is fixed to where her eggs are laid on the banks. So, do all the work of the world but keep the mind in God.'

"And so, after the passing away of our Master, when most of the other disciples voluntarily renounced the world, adopted the yellow robe, and trained themselves to spread Ramakrishna's message through India, I did not give up my profession but carried on with my work in education. Nevertheless, such was my determination not to be of the world although I was in it that on some nights I would retire at dead of night to the open veranda before the Senate House and sleep among the homeless beggars of the city, who usually collected there to spend the night. This used to make me feel temporarily at least, that I was a man with no possessions.

### Spread of Message

"Ramakrishna has gone, but as you travel through India you will see something of the social, philanthropic, medical and educational work being done throughout the country under the inspiration of those early disciples of his, most of whom alas! have now passed away too. What

you will not see so easily is the number of changed hearts and changed lives primarily due to this wonderful man. For his message has been handed down from disciple to disciple, who have spread it as widely as they could. And I have been privileged to take down many of his sayings in Bengali; the published record has entered almost every household in Bengal, while translations have also gone into other parts of India. So you see how Ramakrishna's influence has spread far beyond the immediate circle of his little group of disciples."

### Like One of Israel's Prophets

Mahasaya finishes his long recital and relapses into silence. As I look at his face anew, I am struck by the non-Hindu colour and cast of his face. Again I am wafted back to a little kingdom in Asia Minor, where the children of Israel find a temporary respite from their hard fortunes. I picture Mahasaya among them as a venerable prophet speaking to his people. How noble and dignified the man looks! His goodness, honesty, virtue, piety and sincerity are transparent. He possesses that self-respect of a man who has lived a long life in utter obedience to the voice of conscience.

### Force of Prayer

"I wonder what Ramakrishna would say to a man who cannot live by faith alone, who must satisfy reason and intellect?" I murmur questioningly.

"He would tell the man to pray. Prayer is a tremendous force. Ramakrishna himself prayed to God to send him spiritually inclined people, and soon after that those who later became his disciples or devotees began to appear."

"But if one has never prayed—what then?"

"Prayer is the last resort. It is the ultimate resource left to man. Prayer will help a man where the intellect may fail."

### Company of the Holy

"But if some one came to you and said that prayer did not appeal to his temperament, what counsel would you give him?" I persist gently.

"Then let him associate frequently with truly holy men who have had real spiritual experience. Constant contact with them will assist him to bring out his latent spirituality. Higher men turn our minds and wills towards divine objects. Above all they stimulate an intense longing for the spiritual life. Therefore, the society of such men is very important as the first step, and often it is also the last, as Ramakrishna himself used to say."

Thus we discourse of things high and holy, and how man can find no peace save in the Eternal God. Throughout the evening different visitors make their arrival until the modest room is packed with Indians—disciples of the Master Mahasaya. They come nightly and climb the stairs of this four-storeyed house to listen intently to every word uttered by their teacher.

And for a while I too, join them. Night after night I come, less to hear the pious utterances of Mahasaya than to bask in the spiritual sunshine of his presence. The atmosphere around him is tender and beautiful, gentle and loving; he has found some inner bliss and the radiation of it seems palpable. Often I forget his words, but I cannot forget his benignant personality. That which drew him again and again to Ramakrishna seems to draw me to Mahasaya also, and I begin to understand how potent must have been the influence of the tea-

cher when the pupil exercises such a fascination upon me.

### Parting Benediction

When our last evening comes, I forget the passage of time, as I sit happily at his side upon the divan. Hour after hour has flown by: our talk has had no interlude of silence, but at length it comes. And then the good Master takes my hand and leads me out to the terraced roof of his house where, in the vivid moonlight, I see a circling array of tall plants growing in pots and tubs. Down below a thousand lights gleamed from the houses of Calcutta.

The moon is at its full. Mahasaya points up towards its round face and then passes into silent prayer for a brief while. I wait patiently at his side until he

finishes. He turns, raises his hand in benediction and lightly touches my head.

I bow humbly before this angelic man, unreligious though I am. After a few more moments of continued silence, he says softly:

"My task has almost come to an end. This body has nearly finished what God sent here to do. Accept my blessing before I go."

He has strangely stirred me. I banish the thought of sleep and wander through many streets. When, at length, I reach a great mosque and hear the solemn chant, "*God is most great!*" break forth upon the midnight stillness, I reflect that if any one could free me from intellectual scepticism to which I cling and attach me to a life of simple faith, it is undoubtedly the Master Mahasaya.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE BRAHMA SUTRAS:** *Edited with short and easy Sanskrit annotations and an English commentary giving an expository and critical summary of the contents by Sitanath Tattvabhusan and Satish Chandra Chakravarty, M. A. Published by the Brahmo Mission Press, 211, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Price Rs. 4.*

Philosophy of Vedanta or Uttara Mimamsa is the most popular, prominent and powerful philosophy of India, having a large following among all classes of people. It is regarded in high esteem by all schools of thought, dualists, non-dualists, qualified monists and pure monists, like Sankara, Ramana, Madhva, Nimbarka, Vallabha and other great teachers of India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great revivalist, reformer and patriot-saint of modern India, also wrote a commentary of the same Sutras in Bengali. The present writers are devout and ardent followers of the Raja and preachers of his philosophy. They have done an immense, invaluable good to the English-knowing public by translating

the same in simple and unambiguous English. Although they have taken profusely words, phrases and sentences from Sankara to elucidate the meaning of the aphorisms, they have not followed him through and through. They are not strict and orthodox adherents of the monistic school of philosophy inculcated by the great commentator. They have deviated from him in many ways and have tried to establish a new view, steering clear of Sankara's fundamental doctrine of "illusion" which seems to them "often forced and biased." We appreciate the originality and critical spirit of independence of the Raja and his followers. We wish the book a wide circulation and would recommend it to all lovers of knowledge who are eager to have the main and principal tenets and fundamental teachings of Vedanta in a small and handy treatise of about five hundred pages without undergoing the laborious task of reading the orthodox commentaries abounding in controversial and intricate dialectics.

S. A.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### **Vedanta Society of Washington, D. C.**

The nucleus of the Society was started by Swami Akhilananda in April, 1930, when he came from Providence to Washington and gave a series of lectures at one of the Capital's principal hotels. The lectures were well attended and appreciated, so he continued the work by regular visits and in June, 1931, rented a house on N. Street, N. W., to put the work on a permanent basis.

In November, 1932, Swami Vividishananda, who had been in San Francisco, was placed in charge of the work, and since then he has been trying to organise and build it up. During the season beginning from November to June, 1933, he gave regular lectures every Sunday evening, and held classes every Tuesday and Thursday evening, discoursing on the Gita and the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali. During the current season, in addition to Sunday lectures, classes are being held explaining the texts of the Upanishads and giving short courses of lessons on the different Yogas—the classical mystic paths—preceded by a short meditation. Besides, the Society celebrated the Christmas and the Birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and had the pleasure of having guest speakers like Swami Akhilananda and Swami Gnaneshwarananda, who spoke before quite large and appreciative audiences.

Over and above the regular work, Swami Vividishananda had several outside engagements which contributed not a little to the spreading of the message of Vedanta. In May, 1933, as well as in May, 1934, he spoke at the Unity Centre at one of the conventions of the International Truth Alliance, and in the beginning of the current season he spoke twice before the League for Larger Life. He also spoke once at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York and several times at the Vedanta Society of Providence. At the time of the last World's Fair held in Chicago, the Vedanta Society there

organized a series of lectures, inviting the different Swamis of America to speak. Swami Vividishananda was one of the speakers, lecturing twice before large audiences.

The Society owes a great deal to Swami Akhilananda, who has been an unfailing source of encouragement by his frequent visits, and who has helped the work in many ways.

### **R. K. Mission's Relief Work and Appeal**

#### **(a) BEHAR EARTHQUAKE RELIEF**

This year is singularly marked by numerous calamities. Six months ago the sister province of Behar was afflicted by nature's cruelties in the form of one of the severest and most dangerous earthquakes ever recorded in history. Today the people of Assam are faced with the disastrous effects of sudden and unprecedented floods which have devastated several hundreds of square miles. We were hoping to close the earthquake relief work in Behar in about a month, but before finishing it, we have had to start flood relief work in Assam. The centres of relief at Sitamarhi, Pupri and Gangaya in the district of Muzaffarpore, the centres at Jaynagar, Lahiriasarai and Samashipur in the District of Darbhanga, Manjha Estate in Chapra, Tetaria in Champaran and at Patna have been closed after the necessary relief. The relief centres at Muzaffarpore, Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Motihari will have to be continued for about a month more. The total receipts for the earthquake relief so far are Rs. 1,12,721-5-6, the total expenditure up-to-date being Rs. 1,10,067-2-0. We hope that with the balance of Rs. 2654-3-6, the remaining work can be finished.

#### **(b) ASSAM FLOOD RELIEF**

It is indeed unfortunate that hardly had the people of Behar been beginning to feel relieved of the distress caused by the earthquake than the floods caused terrible havoc in the province of Assam. The whole length of sixty miles between Jagiro and Jumnamukh Railway Stations, covering an area of not

less than 1600 square miles, was a vast sheet of water wherein many villages were swept away by the sudden and strong current, leaving the villagers on tree tops and at the hills and on the railway bunds, where possible. 23 out of 43 mouzas in Nowgong District and 12 mouzas in the District of Kamrup have been inundated. In Nowgong Dt. alone about 10 villages were under water and more than two lakhs of people were affected. The flood-affected areas were scattered over in many parts with dead bodies, mainly of cattle. Human lives also were reported to have been lost. Dwelling houses, granaries with paddy, and cattle in thousands were washed away. The nearly ripe standing crops have been totally destroyed. Thousands of people are suffering from starvation for want of food. To add to their misery, fever, dysentery and cholera have broken out in some of the affected areas.

Immediately on receipt of the information our Mission Branch at Sylhet sent two batches of workers to the affected area as early as the 24th June. Subsequent to preliminary relief they started two centres at Jhingabari and Bholagang after personally inspecting the villages of Dhargram, Plainkul, Ichchkalash and Parhna Parganas and other places. Distribution of rice and other food-stuffs has been going on from all these centres.

Our workers report from Sylhet District that about 500 head of cattle were washed away by the floods from Comilla, Meghergaon and other villages, and of these only about 50 were saved by the people of Chhatak, a village about eight miles away. Paddy, oil-seeds, and other articles have also been carried off by the water. The floods have now subsided, but most of the houses are extremely damp and partly filled with the alluvium borne in by the floods, and many houses have been practically destroyed. In some parts half the number of houses and in other parts more than three-fourths will have to be thoroughly repaired to render them fit for rehabilitation. 90% of the villagers are quite poor and form the worst

sufferers. Some of them are too weak to walk or even to talk as they have been without any morsel of food for a long time.

Our representatives from Nowgong District have also reported the enormous damages caused by the floods, the death of cattle in large numbers as well as the loss of human lives. The misery and sufferings of the people are indeed heart-rending. Our workers have started two centres at Fulaguri and Dharamtul and from these have been steadily extending their activities.

In all the affected areas rice and other food-stuffs, clothes and house-building materials are needed.

The continuation of the work in Nowgong and Sylhet Districts will require a large sum of money. As the crops have been ruined by the floods, the relief will have to be continued till October when the people will have a chance of reaping the fresh harvest. Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 are needed per week. New centres will have to be started, if possible, in other affected areas.

The earthquake relief work of the Mission in Behar is not yet finished. Considering the enormous distress caused by the floods in Assam we have ventured to start work in that province also, with the small balance of money left of the Provident Fund, which will soon be exhausted. Unless the charitable public who have all along been helping us with their kind contributions once again come forward with their generous aid, the work taken up for the alleviation of the misery and sufferings of the poor sisters and brothers of Assam will be seriously handicapped. We therefore earnestly appeal to the kind-hearted and generous public to send us their kind help in the form of money or new clothes, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged by

THE PRESIDENT, SRI RAMAKRISHNA  
MATH, BELUR MATH P. O., DT. HOW  
RAH.

(Sd.) VIRAJANANDA,  
Secretary, R.K. Mission.  
21.7-'34.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman,"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

SEPTEMBER, 1934

[No. 5

## HINDU ETHICS



दमस्तेजो वर्द्धयति पवित्रञ्च दमः परम् ।  
विपाप्मा तेजसा युक्तः पुरुषो विन्दते महत् ॥  
सुखं दान्तः प्रस्वपिति सुखञ्च प्रतिबुद्ध्यते ।  
सुखं पर्येति लोकांश्च मनश्चास्य प्रसीदति ॥  
अदान्तः पुरुषः क्लेशमभीक्ष्णं प्रतिपद्यते ।  
अनर्थाश्च बहूनन्यान् प्रसृजत्यात्मदोषजान् ॥

Self-control enhances energy and is highly sacred. Through self-control a man becomes cleansed of all his sins and possessed of vigour, and as a consequence attains the highest beatitude.

The man of self-control sleeps in felicity, awakes in felicity and moves through the various planes of awareness in felicity. His mind is always cheerful.

The man without self-control suffers misery at all times. Such a man brings upon himself many calamities, all born of his own faults.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CLX, 9, 12 and 13)

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

## *The Master's Humorous Remarks on His Marriage*

**A**T times the Master would indulge in much fun over his marriage. Indeed, how amusing they were! We shall present the reader with a sample here. One day at Dakshineswar the Master was sitting at his noon-meal and talking in a light vein with Sjt. Balaram and a few other devotees. The Holy Mother had started that day for Kamarpukur, to spend a few months there on the occasion of the marriage of Ramlal, the Master's nephew. The Master (to Sjt. Balaram): What is the meaning of the (my) marriage? What is the use of the wife when I cannot keep in order even the cloth on the loins?

Balaram smiled a little and kept silent.

The Master: Indeed! I have now understood. (Showing a little curry picked up from the plate). It is for this only. Otherwise who else would cook for me with so much care? (Sjt. Balaram and the other devotees burst into laughter.) Really, who else will take care of my food with so much interest? They have all gone away today; (The disciples failed to understand whom he meant.) I mean Ramlal's aunt (the Holy Mother). She has left for Kamarpukur on account of Ramlal's marriage. I stood quite

unconcerned and saw the party going. Truly, the mind was not in the least affected on this account, as if they had no connection whatsoever with me. But a little later, the anxiety came as to who would hereafter cook for me. You see all sorts of things do not agree with me. Nor can I myself always be sufficiently attentive to my food. She knew which things would be agreeable and would prepare different courses accordingly. That is why the thought came as to who would now take her place.

*Ordinary Teachers have to marry to complete their Ten Purificatory Ceremonies. Was the Master's marriage, too, for that purpose? No.*

Another day at Dakshineswar the Master remarked with reference to his marriage, "Do you know why marriage is necessary? For a Brahmin's body there are ten purificatory ceremonies; and marriage is one of them. A person is entitled to be a teacher only when he has observed all these ceremonies." Or again, he would sometimes say, "A *Paramahansa*, a perfect *Jnani*, must pass through all the stages of life—from the lowly condition of a sweeper to the exalted position of an emperor. How can he have true renunciation otherwise? For his mind may be disturbed by its hankering after



things which he has not yet enjoyed."

*To a Hindu, marriage is a means to attaining Renunciation through Enjoyments which are not incompatible with Spiritual Life.*

We shall state the special reason for the Master's marriage in so far as we ourselves have understood it, although the Master would give the above explanation for the marriage of ordinary teachers. Our scriptures teach us at every step that our marriage is not for the sake of enjoyment. They reiterate again and again that the aim of our marriage should be the observance of the rule of the continuance of God's creation and the rearing up of virtuous children for the well-being of society.

Should our marriage, then, be wholly freed from all thoughts of enjoyment? Certainly we are not asked to go so far. The ancient seers, the authors of our scriptures, saw through the innermost depth of our beings and were well acquainted with the inherent weakness of human character. They were fully convinced about the fact that man, morally weak as he is, does not understand anything but his personal interest; he does not proceed to do anything whatever without duly calculating his own profit and loss. In spite of all this, the above injunction was laid down with the idea that true good can be attained by us, only if our mean selfish pursuit can be inseparably combined with sublime ideals. Otherwise, bereft of all noble idea-

lism man will be inevitably subjected to endless miseries under the bondage of ceaseless births and deaths.

*Through Enjoyments combined with Discrimination the Truth Gradually Dawns that Joy comes to us with a Crown of Sorrow on its head.*

Oblivious of the true nature of the eternally free Self, man runs after the enjoyment of external objects through the senses and considers this as exceedingly sweet and charming. But, alas, very few people can realise that every bit of joy is inseparably coupled together with misery; and accepting the one means simultaneously accepting the other too. "Joy appears before man," Swami Vivekananda used to say, "with a crown of sorrow on its head." Ordinary people become too much engrossed with the joy alone and find no opportunity for the consideration that the crown of sorrow, too, is there; and that if the one is accepted, the other too must come along with it. Hence it is that our scriptures sound the note of warning: "Beware, O man! Do not consider your enjoyments to be the highest good. For, suffering is its inseparable companion. Rather, look upon both of them from a higher point of view as your teachers, and embrace that alone as the goal of life whereby you can free yourself from their clutches once for all." The aim of the scriptures, therefore, is to teach people how in married

life, through the inevitable experiences of joys and sorrows and with proper discrimination, they can gradually develop the spirit of renunciation, consider all the pleasures of the world as unreal and evanescent, so that they may know God alone as the only essential Reality and strive for communion with Him in right earnest.

*The Master's Instructions as to how the Mind should be Trained to Renounce all Worldly Pleasures*

It is a fact beyond doubt that the mind will invariably give up an object of enjoyment if one proceeds to enjoy it with proper discrimination. That is why the Master would say repeatedly : Discrimination between the real and the unreal is an essential necessity. One should always discriminate and suggest to the mind, 'Well, my mind, you are hankering so much after this food, that dress and so on. But don't you see that all kinds of food, quite ordinary courses as well as the finest delicacies, are made of the same constituents—the five elements? Similarly the same component parts of blood and flesh, of bone and marrow, which are themselves but compounds of the five elements, build the forms of beautiful women as well as of any other creature. Why should there be then such intense longing particularly for these objects? Will they ever help you

to attain the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute?'

But if inspite of these arguments the mind does not yield at all, one should then enjoy the object of desire once or twice along with discrimination and finally give it up once for all. Suppose, for instance, that the mind has got an uncontrollable desire for sweets and all arguments for resisting the temptation prove futile. Take some sweets then and suggest to the mind, 'Well this is called sweetmeat—merely a modification of the five elements just like all other material things. Like any other kind of food, it becomes transformed into the component parts of the body. Its sweetness lasts only so long as it is in contact with the palate. Nothing of the pleasurable sensation persists when the thing passes down the throat. Moreover, if swallowed in large quantity, the consequence will be indisposition. Yet my mind hankers so much after this paltry thing! I'm on me : Let this desire end here once for all.'

(To the monastic disciples) Petty things can be renounced in this way after enjoying them with discrimination. But bigger desires cannot be dealt with in the same manner. For, the moment an aspirant goes to enjoy them, he gets entangled in the trap. Therefore these desires have to be rooted out from the mind *only through discrimination*, by considering the defect inhering in them.

## ADVERTISEMENT AND ITS CHALLENGE

### Why Retain Bait?

**I**S chanting or reading a mere pleasing diversion, in the course of which one is certain to fish up some verse or other whose reminding power, after passing through many unseen coils and accumulators, would discharge itself into some equally unseen connections and bring about the Highest Illumination? If so, should we not see that the passages selected for this exercise are all of a highly spiritual character, with nothing in them to remind the devotee of mundane things and their worthless acquisition? Should we not ensure a straight and speedy spiritual flight for all by re-editing our books and eliminating from them all portions which seem to guarantee worldly satisfactions, and which thereby exert a downward pull on the devotee who utilises them for daily reading?

### Worldly and Childish

Let us, for example, take the instance of the Chandi or Devimahatmyam, which many a sincere worshipper would continue to read and recite daily during the coming festival in honour of the Divine Mother. The Chandi is a collection of seven hundred verses describing how the Mother manifested Herself on numerous occasions for the welfare of Her devotees and overcame in battle all the wicked demons who had deemed them-

selves invincible and oppressed the worlds. The recital of this narrative is to be preceded not only by a brief meditation and worship, but also by a reading of three peculiar chapters called Argala, Kilaka and Kavacha. Each school of devotees may have its own order in the chanting of these three<sup>1</sup>; but no chapter is to be omitted. In very general terms the sages have summed up their utility by means of some rather jingling lines which tell that when the heart is open to receive the Argala, the devotee is "freed from all obstacles," that the Kilaka "binds securely" the objects of his desires, and that the Kavacha serves him like an armour under all unfavourable circumstances.<sup>2</sup> Entering into details, we find in them an astonishing variety of invocations and prayers which—after due allowance is made for differences in reading in the various manuscripts used for printing—are patently worldly, and often childish in tone.

Spiritual life, the scriptures point out, can begin only when the attachment to sense-objects wanes and the aspirant banishes the usual feverish anxiety to procure them,

1. अर्गलं कीलकञ्चादौ पठित्वा कवचं पठेत् ।  
जपेत् सप्तशतिं पञ्चात् क्रम एषः शिवोदितः॥
2. अर्गलं हृदये यस्य तथाऽनर्गलवानसौ ।  
कीलकं हृदये यस्य स कीलितमनोरथः ॥  
कवचं हृदये यस्य सर्वैत कवची खलु ।

or to retain them when won. He has also to realise intellectually that he is an immortal essence distinct from the body and mind which are but material instruments destined to perish when the forces that brought them into existence get spent up. But how can such a noble attitude be engendered in an aspirant who fervently chants prayers that can only increase his clinging to life and thirst for pleasures ?

### An Exhaustive List

"Oh Thou fair-complexioned Mother of the three worlds," says one profusely alliterative invocation, "charm, charm all minds (to my advantage); kill, kill my enemies forthwith; and in my wide awake, dream and deep sleep states save, save me and mine from dangers and troubles due to kings and thieves (significant proximity, to be sure!); fires and floods; poisons, ghosts and enemies in general; fevers, tumours and various other diseases; magical spells; scandals and all possible vile and crooked designs of my opponents."<sup>3</sup>

Says the Argala in the latter half of almost all its verses, "Mother, give me beauty, give me success, give me fame and vanquish my

enemies."<sup>4</sup> It varies this single note by adding in other places such requests as for example, "Procure for me a wife who will delight my mind," and "Bestow on me sons and wealth, and the objects of every other desire arising in my heart."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the last clause covers any item that may have been omitted due to oversight !

The Kilaka makes various comforting affirmations. Composed by the Great God Himself, it is capable of giving, among other things, complete freedom from fear, a normal death and salvation afterwards.<sup>6</sup> Destruction of enemies falls within its scope along with the neutralisation of magical spells. Is it therefore any wonder that people accord it unstinted praise ?

### A Wholly Divine Guard

The Kavacha is of a slightly different order. After a preliminary promise of prosperity and safety from fires and weapons, it proceeds to invoke diverse goddesses, who are but different aspects of the Mother, and request them to station themselves fully armed at various strategic and vital points, physical and mental, for warding off the blows that might fall in those quarters. Thus, for example, the Sword-wielding Mother is to guard the two shoulders and the Vajra-

3. तैलोक्यवरवर्णिनि ! समस्तचित्तं वशीकुरु वशीकुरु ; मम शत्रून् शीघ्रं मारय मारय ; जाग्रत्-स्वप्न-सुषुप्त्यावस्थामु अस्मान् राज-चोर-अग्नि-जल-वात - विष-भूत-शत्रु - मृत्यु-ज्वरादि - स्फोटकादि-नानारोगेभ्यो, नानाभिचारेभ्यो, नानापवादेभ्यो, परकर्म - मन्त्र-तन्त्र यन्त्र - औषध - शल्य - शून्य-क्षुदेभ्यः सम्यग्रक्ष रक्ष !!!-

4. रूपं देहि जयं देहि यशो देहि द्वियो जहि ।

5. पत्नीं मनोरमां देहि मनोवृत्ताऽनुसारिणीम् ।  
पुत्रान् देहि, धनं देहि, सर्वकामांश्च देहि मे ॥

6. ....भयं कापि न जायते ।

नापमृत्युवशं याति, मृतो मोक्षमवाप्नुयात् ॥

holding Mother the arms, while the cheeks or the roots of the ears are placed under the charge of Kalika and the Consort of Siva. Sons and grandchildren are entrusted significantly to the care of the Mother of Prosperity, the wife to that of Bhairavi, the Terrible, and cattle to that of Chandika. And if any point has been left out in this fortification, let Jayanti, the Remover of sin, cover it up and afford protection.<sup>7</sup> After this elaborate invocation, the Kavacha also, like the other two, gives a list of the benefits derivable by a repetition of it, beginning from power and fame in the three worlds, a long life of one hundred years for the devotee himself and the continuation of the line of his descendants so long as the earth remains supporting the mountains, hills and forests.<sup>8</sup>

### Ruinous in Every Respect

Name, fame, clinging to life, relatives and wealth—these are the things to be avoided by the spiritual aspirant. Yet, here, curiously enough,

7. खड्गधारियुभौ स्कन्धौ बाहू मे वज्रधारिणी।  
 कपोलौ कालिका रक्षेत् कर्णमूले तु शंकरौ॥  
 पुत्रान् पौत्रान् महालक्ष्मीभार्या रक्षतु भैरवी ।  
 .....पशून् मे रक्ष चरिडके ॥  
 रक्षाहीनं च यत्स्थानं वर्जितं कवचेन तु ।  
 तत्सर्वं रक्ष मे देवी जयन्ती पापनाशिनी ॥

8. तैलोक्येऽपि भवेत् पूज्यः कवचेनावृतः  
 पुमान् ।

परमैश्वर्यमतुलं प्राप्यते भूतले पुमान् ।  
 जीवेद्दशशतं विद्वानपमृत्युविवर्जितः ।  
 यावद्भूमरडलं तिष्ठेत् सशैलवनकाननं ।  
 तावत्तिष्ठति मेदिन्यां सन्ततिः पुत्रपौत्रिकी ॥

are scores of prayers almost the whole of which elaborately advertise these very dangerous items as supplied either gratis, or as material equivalents of the worship performed! Is there any justification for the inclusion of these unsurpassed reminders of sensual pleasures in the passages to be selected for *daily* recital? Only one consequence is to be expected: The little dispassion with which the well-meaning man begins his spiritual pilgrimage would be slowly rubbed out of him by the persistent use of this unique advertisement file!

### Where Our Normality Really Stands

To this formidable array of facts and argument, let us reply in the first instance by viewing some of the psychological changes involved in the spiritual evolution of an aspirant. No one denies that all hankering after pleasures, here or hereafter, should be rooted out before he can hope to attain higher states of awareness. But how can such a stage itself be reached? Leaving aside all theory, when we get into actual practice and impartially proceed to take stock of our mental equipment, what do we find? There may be a faint glow of dispassion, no doubt. But what about our arbitrary distinction between a religious field in which we believe we *ought to behave* towards one another like mutually-loving children of an All-loving God, and a secular field in which we consider it legitimate to enlarge our poss-

essions at the expense of our "neighbour-brothers" and "stranger-brothers" by the application of every conceivable law, self-made and other made, but all breakable if we can avoid detection? What also about our numerous desires which are kept repressed only, not sublimated; or which, we actually know in our heart of hearts, are the foundations for our actions as well as our rationalisations? Enemies, misunderstandings on the part of others, and scandals are the common lot of all, the most highly advanced sage forming no exception. And if the hostilities may not always culminate in a crucifixion, they will yet be potent enough to create painful conflicts, and not unoften a most human yearning that "the cup" may "pass" from us. "Lord," says even the sincere aspirant very often, noticing the undesirable workings of his mind, "I know what virtue is, though my deeds are not in accord with it; but neither can I refrain from what I am certain is evil." 9

It is true that when the power of self-analysis is not sufficiently developed, a person may not be able to detect the hidden motives and training formulas on which his very character is built. He may even protest violently if any one suggests the existence of such motives and formulas in what he considers his quite normal impulses and behaviour. Yet formulas do exist,

even as poetic and self-flattering ones as, "When I open my mouth, let no dogs bark!" And as for death wishes, we have to think ourselves blessed that there is no deity to take us seriously at all times and fulfil them as soon as they are discharged at our numerous enemies. Else all human beings would have compassed one another's death in no time during their *secular* moments and a good many of our destructive thought-missiles would have run into sheer waste due to overlapping!

### Wherein the Genuinely Spiritual Differ

Analysis would thus reveal that even in the minds of those who appear to be too spiritually advanced to need the Kavacha stage of Sadhana, there persist training formulas based upon the hankering after pleasures and the desire to destroy obstacles. Men, after all, differ only in the range of their desires, in the field of activities in which they cannot brook rivals and the methods they would consider just in disposing of their opponents. To a person who has acquired riches and who looks upon political leadership as his next objective, the plane of enemies has undoubtedly shifted from the competitors for an ordinary clerk's post; and it might appear to most onlookers as if he is generous and incapable of descending to low levels. But what has happened is that with the change of his immediate goal, the group of possible enemies too has undergone a change; and we may reasonably expect him to utilise

9. जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः ।

जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः ॥

against his new enemies all the weapons that have helped him to achieve success in his earlier battles. People are thus friends, chiefly because their interests do not clash. It is only genuinely spiritual persons who refrain from starting clashes for selfish aggrandisement. Even they, however, draw on them the wrath and enmity of others whenever they uphold vigorously the cause of truth and justice. It is, again, they alone whose fights are carried on, not for the destruction of the physical bodies of those who oppose them, but for a bliss-giving substitution of all erroneous ideas by correct ones, and thus for the removal of the principle of opposition itself.

Viewed from this standpoint, then, spiritual culture is a disciplining of the individual till his desires, conception of enemies and methods of fighting undergo a progressive purification. Advance remains proportionate to the extent that he succeeds in attaching himself not to a perishable ego-consciousness, but to a clarified idea of truth and justice, of *Satyam*, of Reality. In its maintenance on the mental and physical plane, it is only prejudices and selfish motives that would become the targets of attack, but never the bodies of the persons involved. There are other views of spiritual life possible, based upon the harmonisation of the personality, or even the transcending of it into an Indefinable yet Blissful Fulness. But for the present we restrict our discussion to that aspect of spiritual development

which consists in the re-education of thoughts and feelings, and is therefore observable and "definable".

### Is Any One to be Shut Out?

The question now resolves into this: The principle of desires and removal of enemies persists in howsoever purified and sublimated a condition in the mental make-up of the *wide awake* state of even spiritually advanced persons who suffer martyrdom for the "redemption of others." Where, then, is the lowest limit at which individuals can be admitted for this supremely valuable and covetable of disciplines? Is there any minimum sublimation at all, to be effected by a *non-religious* training, *after which alone* persons may expect to be allowed the benefit of religious training as such? In other words, are we going to tell people, "Somehow or other purify yourself to this particular extent; from there onwards 'our religion' will undertake to purify you?" Evidently such a stipulation is meaningless, as the very methods that helped to wash away the grossest impurities of the earlier stages must have in them the potentialities for further chastening, and can by no means be styled "*non-religious*".

### Provision for All

In the Hindu methods of worship and chant, therefore, we come across various devices calculated to give an initial lift to individuals in whatever gross form of "selfishness" they may happen to be at

the time. None is to be neglected on the ground of his existing training formulas; for they are all capable of being replaced by better and more virtuous ones. And religion, if it is worth the name, must be able to handle such cases also and prescribe mixtures which can remove some of the unbearable symptoms much in advance of the expected complete cure.

### **Fear, No Plan to Plunder**

Looked at in this way the Argala, Kilaka and Kavacha are admirably suited for the initial discipline of even the grossest mind. A careful analysis will reveal to any unprejudiced person that they do not contain a single prayer asking for divine intervention to further selfish aggrandisement. Sensual pleasures, health, fame, progeny and wealth are no doubt sought as the means for the fulfilment of life. But there is not the slightest suggestion that any of these is to be secured at the expense of other people's legitimate claims. The enemies mentioned so often in the prayers are not enemies in the sense that they have wealth which the devotee now seeks to snatch away unlawfully, pitching a favourable deity's divine aggressiveness against the flimsy fortifications erected by the humanly limited shrewdness of his victims.

### **A Comprehensive Appeal**

The devotee envisaged by the chants has emerged from that plundering mentality altogether, and is suffering rather from a wildly ab-

normal sense of fear and insecurity which makes him fancy *himself* to be the victim, surrounded by a host of adversaries including kings, thieves and magicians representing roughly lawful force, unlawful force and witchcraft. Modern analytical doctors know the paralysing properties of Fear with the numerous forms of disguise it can adopt to retain its sway over the man with "persecution" and other manias. The only way of combating Fear is to introduce the sense of "Security" in as many imperceptible ways as possible into the mind of the sufferer. We have to comfort him and assure him in a general way as well as in a most detailed way, regarding the points on which he feels himself unsafe. If an appeal in the name of medical science, legal rights and popular support will not succeed in allaying his apprehensions, the last resort (not, however in point of efficacy and truth value) must be an appeal in the name of an All-powerful Entity, gracious towards His devotees and terrible towards their oppressors. It is such a comprehensive appeal that the passages in question convey to the worshipper by means of an exhaustive list of earthly and heavenly rewards.

### **Superstition, Normal and Efficacious**

Is this not superstition? Yes, if we like to brand it so; it is as much a superstition as is the equator we draw across the entire sphere of life's activities for maintaining an artificial distinction between a secular zone as opposed to a religious



one. It is also as much a superstition as is the sense of insecurity that the aspirant finds within himself but, unlike most of us, does not deem it a shame to confess. It is, at any rate, deadly to the feeling of fear and therein lies its efficacy. It is, besides, a superstition that contains the seeds that can later develop into the tree of spirituality, ready to expose itself to the inclemencies of the weather in order to afford shelter to many a suffering creature beneath its spreading branches.

### Device to Arouse Healthy Questioning

To lure people, by a promise of earthly and heavenly rewards, to take up a discipline calculated to work up their reasoning power to such a height as to make them question, and ultimately disregard all advertisements, is a common method employed by our religious books. The dispassion that comes out of one's own direct experience of the transience of advertised rewards,

has got an abiding value and forms the ideal foundation for the rearing up of a spiritual edifice.<sup>10</sup> Advertisement as we meet with in our books is helpful also because it is so framed as to compel the aspirant to attempt a few meditations, although of course the standard expected of him in the beginning may not be high enough for the use of so dignified a term. But if he once enters upon it, he is bound sooner or later to find it a *challenge* that can be met only by a searching enquiry into the nature of the strands composing his personality and by an honest effort to set right what is amiss therein.

As to how far the Argala and the other two as well as the Chandi prepare the ground for higher meditations, we propose to discuss in the next issue.

10. परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेद-  
मायात् ॥

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

13th SRAVANA, 1325 B. E.

### The Light of the Math

**S**WAMI Premananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, had passed away in the evening. I went to see the Mother at dusk. The mother said, "Come in, my child. Take your seat. Today my Baburam (Swami Premananda) has passed away. I have been weeping since

the morning." She again burst into tears. Continuing she said, "Baburam was dearest to my heart. The strength, devotion, reason and all the virtues of the Belur Math were embodied in him. He was the very light of the Math. His mother had inherited her father's property. She became a little proud about it. She herself confessed to me, 'I had some

gold ornaments and I thought of the world as a mere mud-puddle.' She has left behind four children. Only one child had died before her."

After a while I saw the Holy Mother placing her head at the feet of the picture of Sri Ramakrishna hung from the southern wall of the room and uttering in a heart-rending voice, "Oh Lord! You have taken away my Baburam." I could hardly restrain my tears. Golap-Ma was also seriously ill of blood-dysentery. She was almost on her death-bed.

14th SRAVANA, 1325 B. E.

### **Ever Mindful of Others' Interests**

It was half-past seven in the evening. The Holy Mother was seated in the Shrine room. No sooner had I saluted her than she said, "Please spread my carpet in the verandah and roll my bed which is lying on the floor near the bedstead. The devotees will sit there at the time of the evening service." Vilas Maharaj had been making arrangements for the service. I spread the carpet on the porch. The Mother said, "There is Ganges water in the bowl. Please bring it here, my child." She washed her face and hands with the water and sat on the carpet for meditation. She gave the fan to me. I began to move it gently over her body. A little later the evening service commenced. The Holy Mother saluted the image of Sri Ramakrishna with folded hands, and witnessed the evening service. After the service was over, Vilas Maharaj prostrated before the Holy

Mother and said, "Mother, it is a very hot day."

Mother (anxiously): Do you require a little fanning?

Vilas Maharaj: Who will do it?

Mother: Why? Here is my child. She will do it.

I fanned him for a few minutes when he remarked, "Mother, she was fanning you. Let her continue to do so. I do not require it any more." He left the room.

### **Blessed in Serving a Devotee**

Again the Mother referred to Swami Premananda and said, "My child, in the body of Baburam there was neither flesh nor blood. It was a mere skeleton." Chandra Babu came to the room and joined in our talk. He told the Mother that some devotees gave sandal-wood, butter, flowers, incense, etc., for the cremation of the Swami's body. The Mother remarked, "Their money is, indeed, blessed. They have spent it for a devotee. God has given them abundantly and will give them more." Chandra Babu left the room.

### **Where the Great Differ**

"Listen, my child," she continued, "However spiritual a man may be he must pay the tax for the body to its last farthing. But the difference between a great soul and an ordinary man is this: The latter weeps while leaving this body whereas the former laughs. Death seems to them mere play.

### **The Master's Jokes**

"Ah, my dear Baburam came to Sri Ramakrishna while he was a

mere boy. Sri Ramakrishna used to make great fun with them. Naren (Swami Vivekananda) and Baburam would roll on the ground with laughter. Once, while living in the Cossipore garden, I had been climbing the steps carrying a pitcher with five pounds of milk. I felt giddy and the milk spilt on the ground. My heels were dislocated. Naren and Baburam ran there and took care of me. There was a great inflammation of the feet. Sri Ramakrishna heard of the accident and said to Baburam, 'Well, Baburam ! It is a nice mess I am in. Who will cook my food ? Who will feed me now ?' He was then ill of the cancer in the throat and lived only on farina pudding. I used to make the pudding and feed him in his room in the upper storey of the house. I had, then, a ring in my nose. Sri Ramakrishna touched his nose and made the sign of the ring by describing a circle with his finger, in order to indicate me. He then said, 'Baburam, can you put her (making the sign) in a basket and carry her on your shoulder to this room?' Naren and Baburam were convulsed with side-splitting laughter. Thus he used to cut jokes with them. After three days the swelling subsided. Then they helped me to go upstairs with his meals.

### Extent of Love

"Baburam used to tell his mother, 'How little you love me ! Do you love me as Sri Ramakrishna does ?' 'How foolish !' she would reply, 'I am your mother, and I do not love you ! What do you mean ?'

Such was the depth of Sri Ramakrishna's love ! While four years old, Baburam would say, 'I will not marry, or I will die.' When Sri Ramakrishna was suffering from the throat cancer and could not swallow his food, he said one day, 'I shall eat later on in my subtle body through a million mouths.' Baburam replying said, 'I do not care for your million mouths or your subtle body. What I want is that you should eat through this mouth and that I should see this gross body.'

"Sri Ramakrishna never accepted anyone with numerous children. A man begets twenty-five children ! What a shame ! Is he a man ! No self-control ! He is a veritable beast !"

### Right Persons at the Right Time

Golap-Ma had been suffering from an attack of blood-dysentery. She was slightly better today. The doctor said that it would take three months to come round completely. The Holy Mother said : "Blood-dysentery is not a simple disease. Sri Ramakrishna would often be down with that disease. It happened frequently during the rainy season. At one time he was rather seriously ill. I used to attend him. A woman from Benares came to Dakshineswar. She suggested a remedy. I followed her directions and the Master was soon cured. The woman also disappeared. I never met her again. She had really helped me a great deal. I inquired about her at Benares but could not find her. We have often seen that at the time of Sri Ramakrishna's greatest necessity people

would come of themselves to Dakshin-  
neswar and then disappeared just  
as suddenly.

"I also suffered from dysentery,  
my child. The body became a mere  
skeleton. I would lay myself down  
near the tank. One day I saw my  
reflection in the water and noticed  
that all that remained of my body

were only a few bones. I thought,  
'Dear me! What is the use of this  
body? Let me give it up. Let me  
leave it here.' A woman came and  
said, 'Hallo, Mother! Why are you  
here? Come, let us go home.' She  
took me home."

Late at night I took leave of the  
Holy Mother.

## CONCEPT AND REALITY

*By Anagarica Govinda*

[This short article contains a forcible plea for the rooting out of all sense of 'separateness' and for the realisation of the 'unlimited' within us. What is gained, we are asked, by breaking images of clay, if we are going to be caught by 'definitions' and 'conceptual' images which, like parasites, live at the expense of their owners.—*Ed.*]

### From Experience to Philosophy

**I**F we study the history of religion we find that a very simple but profound experience stands at the beginning and that the wish to express and to preserve this experience in words, led to the formation of systems, creeds and dogmas. As the common language was unable to interpret adequately the visions of reality, people took refuge in the symbolic language of poetry. This was handed down from generation to generation either orally or in writing; but even though the words remained the same, the people who repeated them through the centuries did not. They changed slowly but steadily and thus the distance between men and words became greater and greater, until they had lost all connection with the living generation and it became necessary

to imbue them with new life by suitable interpretation. But soon it was discovered that various interpretations were possible, and therefore the interpreters were compelled to demonstrate the superiority of their respective systems. This was the birth of logic and the foundation of philosophy.

At first this logic worked merely with the more poetical or symbolical concepts of the earlier stages of religious experience and grew into a kind of theological philosophy, the function of which was simply to support some existing tradition and to convert it into a solid dogmatical system. Later on, after this logic had proved useful as a spiritual support, it was believed that the method itself would be able to lead to the discovery of Absolute Truth, if only such presuppositions would be

chosen which were universally acknowledged as true. This was the stage of independent, or let us say relatively independent, philosophy (because nobody can entirely free himself from the paths).

### Limitations of Logic

If logic had really been what it was expected to be, all the thinkers, at least those who started from universally acknowledged facts, would ultimately have reached the same result. There would no longer have been any doubt about what is right and what is wrong. In short, truth would have been established at last. But just the contrary happened. Even where thinkers started from the same presuppositions and proceeded with the same kind of logic, results differed. The problems, instead of being simplified became more and more complicated. Yet there is no reason to blame logic for this failure. That would be just as foolish as blaming a knife for not being able to cut water into pieces. Every instrument has its limitation and is useful only for those things or conditions for which it is planned.

Logic is of great help in all practical questions in the realm of solid things and that type of thinking derived from them; and if we examine it critically, all thinking is a mental process of handling "things." Thinking means to divide the floor of reality into things. In the interest of experience, and in order to grasp perceptions, the intellect breaks up experience which

is in reality a continuous stream and incessant process of change and response with no separate parts, into purely conventional "moments", "periods", or psychic "states." It picks out from the floor of reality these bits which are significant for human life, which "interest" it, catch its attention. From these it makes up a mechanical world in which it dwells, and which seems quite real until it is subjected to criticism. It does, says Bergson, in an apt and already celebrated simile, the work of a cinematograph, takes snapshots of some thing which is always moving, and by means of these successive static representations—none of which are real, because life, the object photographed, never was at rest—it recreates a picture of life, of motion. This picture, this rather jerky representation of divine harmony, from which innumerable moments are left out, is very useful for practical purposes; but it is not reality, because it is not alive.

### If Time and Rhythm Change

This "real world," then, is the result of your selective activity, and the nature of your selection is largely outside your control. Your cinematographic machine goes at a certain place, takes its snapshots at certain intervals. Anything which goes too quickly for those intervals, it either fails to catch, or merges with preceding and succeeding movements to form a picture with which it can deal. Thus we treat, for instance, a storm of vibrations which we convert into "sound" and

"light". Slacken or accelerate its clock-time, change its rhythmic activity and at once you take a different series of snapshots, and have as a result a different picture of the world. Thanks to the time at which the normal human machine is set, it registers for us what we call, in our simple way, "the natural world." A slight accession of humility or common sense might teach us that a better title would be "our natural world".

Now let human consciousness change or transcend its rhythm,\* and any other aspect of any other world may be ours as a result. Hence the mystics' claim that in their ecstasies they change the conditions of consciousness and apprehend a deeper reality which is unrelated to human speech, cannot be dismissed as unreasonable. Do not then confuse that intellect, that surface consciousness which man has trained to be an organ of utility and nothing more, and which therefore can only tackle adequately only the "given" world of sense, with that mysterious Something in you—inarticulate but inextinguishable—by which you are aware that a greater truth exists.† We usually replace the continuity of movement by the relations of its elementary faces. But as the plurality of relations, existing in every face, is a hindrance to logical operations, which are based on the laws of identity and

non-identity, and therefore deal with absolute units and not with groups of relations—all those relations are abstracted from the group, until nothing but a "pure concept" remains.

### Experience Versus Definition

In this way the divine experience of what is noble and good within us leads to the absolute concept of goodness, of "the good" as such, from which the term "good" is derived. As soon as the term was there, people did not care more for the reality within themselves but began to speculate about the term. They believed to have found God while actually they had lost Him. God just as Love, denotes a relation towards something beyond the limits of our known little personality. Without this relation there is neither God (goodness) nor Love, whether we believe in them or not. The most elaborate definition of Love cannot help us, if we are not able to feel it.

There is a beautiful saying of Sri Ramakrishna about Love towards God. One of his hearers confessed that he was not able to love. "If that is so," said Ramakrishna, "try to love your fellow men." "No, I cannot!" But is there not somebody whom you like?" insisted Ramakrishna. "Yes, my nephew." "Well, then love your nephew!" The quintessence of this little dialogue is that it does not matter so much what the object of our love is (as long as it is real love) but that it is the experience of love that matters. It is just the same with

\*As it is done in meditation, specially in its higher stages.

† Evelyn Underhill: "Mysticism". P. 35 f.

God whatever we may understand by this term, it is only the experience that counts. And the more profound the experience is, the less room is there for definitions, because definitions mean limitations, and the experience of God is the experience of the limitless, the unlimited within ourselves.

When Bahava was questioned by Vaskali, he expounded the nature of Brahman to him by maintaining silence. "Teach me," said Vaskali, "most Reverent Sir, the nature of Brahman." Bahava however remained silent. But when the question was put forth a second and a third time he answered, "I teach you indeed, you do not understand; the Atman is silence."\*

### Concept Image Worse than Clay Image

This is exactly the Buddha's attitude. How much bloodshed and misery would have been avoided if the world would have followed his example, if humanity would have understood the value of silence. Jews, Christians, and Mohamedans were taught not to make any image of God, but they did not know that worse than any sculptured or painted image are those images which are made of dead concepts and empty words. No intelligent man will take a picture or a brazen image for "God," but there are millions who believe in concepts, worship principles and sacrifice the happiness of their fellow-beings for word fetishes. But what about those who

are not intelligent, who are in a child-like state, what about them, somebody may ask. Have you never seen a little girl playing with dolls? The doll means a real child to her even if it is ugly and crude, and she feels herself as a little mother. We say the doll is not a child and the girl is no mother, both are illusions. Well but the love which the little girl experienced and which made her heart beat with joy was no illusion. That is the point. But, for abstract concepts we cannot even feel love, they neither have reality nor do they lead to reality and mostly they are misleading. They are like vampires who themselves are bloodless shadows and suck the blood from the living. What is worse, a clay image is easy to break, but a concept is such a dead thing that we cannot even kill it. The child will grow beyond the doll and will forget or break it, after it served its purpose; but concepts the older they grow the more powerful they become. They live like parasites at the expense of their owners.

Better let savages have their fetishes, children their dolls and idol worshippers their idols. As long as they have the power to fill the objects of their devotion with life there will be more reality in them than in all the philosophy about God and soul. Woe to those, who in their foolish arrogance break idols and images of others in order to impose on them their brain-manufactured "God" and cheap prayer books. It needs much more creative imagination and concentra-

\* Dasgupta "History of Indian Philosophy," p. 46.

tion to worship an idol than to read ready-made prayers. There is more idealism (in the most literal sense of the word) in those people who are able to see a higher reality in the beauty of an image or a representation of higher forces even in the form of a crude stone, than in those "intellectuals" who reduce the world to a system of formulas and believe only in principles.

### Oneness, Not Conceptual Separateness

If anybody has fought against such mental stagnation, it was the Buddha. He was the first among the great leaders of humanity who recognised the danger of conceptual thought and philosophical abstractions. His *anatta*-(and *anicca*) doctrine was the greatest protest ever made against conceptualism and dogmatism. He knew that as long as we believe in an absolute self (*atman*) *i.e.*, in a mere abstraction, which has no reality, no con-

nection with life nor with anything else, we would never escape the jungle of theories, never be able to experience the "unlimited" within us. "Even were a permanent individuality to be possible it would not be desirable, for it is not desirable to be separate. The effort to keep oneself separately may succeed indeed for a time, but so long as it is successful it involves limitation, and therefore ignorance, and therefore pain. No! it is not separateness you should hope and long for, says the Buddhist, it is union, the sense of oneness with all that now is, that has ever been, that can ever be—the sense that shall enlarge the horizon of your being to the limits of the Universe, to the boundaries of time and space, that shall lift you up into a new place far beyond, outside all mean and miserable care for self."\*

---

\*T. W. Rhys Davids, cit. in "The Dhamma", p. 47 by Dr. Paul Carus.

## WHAT INDIA HAS MEANT TO ME<sup>1</sup>

*By Sister Christine*

**I**NDIA possesses a peculiar fascination. Sooner or later all fall under its spell; some immediately, some like Hegel, who never having seen, yet have loved it and said: "It has always been the land of one's longings; it seems to us a fairy realm, a fairy world." Even those who have for years called it the land of regrets find in the end

that they cannot shake off the spell of its glamour.

What is the secret of this fascination? Is it the white wonder of the Taj, or the jewelled palaces of the Moguls? Is it the sculptured cave Temples hidden in lonely ravines and deserted mountain ridges? Some will say it is the ruins that lie scattered upon the sites of

---

\* All rights reserved.



ancient capitals that recall the lines: "So fleet the works of men, back to their earth again. Ancient and holy things fade like a dream." Others will say it is the country itself, with its mighty rivers flowing through vast opalescent plains, with its towering Himalayas, looking into the very mysteries of Heaven. Others again may think it is the romance of its ancient civilisation extending back into the dim twilight of prehistoric ages which still lives today, for here one may wander through cities more ancient than Rome, cities not of the dead as Pompeii, but of the living.

It is all this, it is the sum-total of all this, it is more—it is the call of the soul of man whether he knows it or not. All this external beauty is but a fragment, a reflection, a ray of that beauty which is invisible, unseen, eternal. Beyond it, behind it, shining through it is the Great Reality. This is the secret of the fascination, of the glamour, of the irresistible attraction, for India's gift to the world is the Light Spiritual. This spirituality is represented on the material plain by majesty, beauty, charm, by mighty citadels of snow standing guard over radiant plains and majestic rivers.

An Artist perhaps will think it is the picturesque villages, the winding lanes, the brilliant colours and graceful draperies.

India is the land of introspection and spirituality, the land of the Avatars and founders of religion,—Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Sankaracharya, and others from the most ancient times, down to the present day, an unbroken line of luminous souls.

If the 'wealth of Ind' is now only a memory of the past, she still has those more precious treasures of which she cannot be despoiled.

Inexhaustible mines of spiritual riches still remain to bless not only her children but the whole world. Of all the gems in this vast treasure house, there is one peerless, precious beyond price, the Koh-i-noor of the collection, and that is the teaching of the Atman, the revelation of the glory and divinity of man, the knowledge of his heritage through which he knows himself to be immortal, to be one whom death and sorrow cannot touch, without beginning and without end, before whose magnitude the suns and moons and stars and all their systems appear like drops in the ocean, before whose glory universes crumble into nothingness and space and time vanish. This is the wondrous "Evangel of the Self".

The Realisation of This is the Final Achievement, Moksha, Nirvana, Samadhi. Reaching That and That alone, the Supreme Goal is reached. Never is this Transcendent Truth quite forgotten in India.

# PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH IN THE WORLD OF MODERN THOUGHT\*

*By Swami Bhutesananda*

*(A Criticism)*

**W**E express our most cordial sympathy and appreciation for the author's vital interest in religion, his liberal attitude towards other faiths and his special recognition of the philosophical contributions of India to the future world religion. But with all respects for the author's sentiments we feel constrained to refer to some of his views which seem to us unjustifiable.

The author is a Christian by birth as well as by adoption. He has openly stated in the opening chapter of the book that he will proceed with the inquiry from the Christian point of view. Therefore it is quite natural that his theistic preconceptions did not allow him to fully understand and appreciate other angles of vision which make things appear in somewhat different lights. We shall briefly mention below only a few of the points which are significant in this respect.

## **I. Definition of Religion**

To define religion is perhaps one of the most difficult feats which a writer on theology has to perform. Our author offers here the following as the definition of religion. "Reli-

gion, presupposing and involving the pursuit of values regarded as of supreme importance, is essentially a conscious relation of dependence on and adjustment to a higher Reality or Power, upon which man's highest values are believed ultimately to depend; also when the result of the adjustment is satisfactory, an experience of deliverance or achievement, interpreted as due to the agency of that higher Reality or religious Object; and finally a more or less mystical contemplation of, and a willed co-operation with the religious Object or higher Power to which in the first place conscious adjustment was made."

This may suffice as a definition of the dualistic forms of religion but can never be adopted as one covering other varieties of religious pursuits such as those followed by some sects of Buddhists and the Vedantins of the Advaita school. According to them religion does by no means necessarily involve any 'relation of dependence on' or 'deliverance by' or 'contemplation of' any religious Object that is believed by dualists to be different from the aspirant's own self. More-

---

\* *Pilgrimage of Faith in the World of Modern Thought*: (Mainly) the Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lectures in Comparative Religion delivered by Douglas Clyde Macintosh before the University of Calcutta. Published by the University of Calcutta.

over among dualists too, there are many characters decidedly religious in whom this attitude of dependence on God is wholly absent.

## II. The Doctrine of Karma

The author is one of the few Western scholars who have made any serious efforts to understand the true significance of the doctrine of Karma, although he too has fallen into the common error of confusing Karma with fatalism. The grand doctrine of Karma might have in some rare instances degenerated into dangerous and absurd fatalism no doubt. But that does not mean that it is often accepted here in that sense. Very far from it, Karma is just the opposite of fate. It boldly declares that every individual is the maker of his own destiny; he has every power to build his future in any form he likes. Complete reign of law does not by any freak of reason mean complete determination. It is a wonder why Eastern thinkers are so often branded as hopelessly deterministic simply because they believe in the law of Karma.

Continued existence of the individual soul after its bodily death has been accepted by East on the basis of the law of Karma long before the advent of Kant, and this is the only rationally sound outlook of an orderly nature. But we do not understand why the application of this law should be restricted to the life after death only as Western theologians have done without any cogent reason for this arbitrary

limitation. Christian theology will not permit its adherents to accept the antenatal existence of the soul, a necessary corollary of the law of Karma which the author too has agreed to in its partial application. Is God so very whimsical and guided by His likes and dislikes as to place different souls without any rhyme and reason into different circumstances at the very beginning of their existence and thereby give some of them a very favourable start while others are doomed to set out on their journey with miserably inadequate equipments? What explanation of this anomaly is possible other than either that the coming into existence of individual souls is not within the province of law but guided by mere chance, or that the favourable or unfavourable circumstances at the initial stage also are determined by Karma and necessarily by the Karma of one's own past lives?

## III. The Individual and the Absolute \*

Interminable continuance of the existence of individual souls as such, and of the physical nature as real external entities, forms the other deep-seated complex which it is extremely difficult for dualistic thinkers like our author to get rid of. If they object to the absorption of nature and the limited souls into the Absolute on practical grounds, the objection is quite

\* We use the term 'Absolute' here to mean the non-dualism of the Advaita Vedanta which holds that the non-dual Principle is the only Reality and the substratum on which all phenomena are superimposed.

legitimate and they have every right to retain their views so far as the practical adjustments to the environment require them. But we fail to see why this practical necessity should be equated with theoretical certainty. We know fully well, and modern science too has proved beyond doubt, that our senses do not give us correct readings of things. What right have we then to take them as they are? But the illusory nature of the phenomena we have to deal with constantly in our every-day life does not very much interfere with our practical adjustment to them. Even the distinction of reality and appearance among phenomena themselves is maintained intact for all practical purposes. But nonetheless they are all reduced to the level of unreality from a higher standpoint—the standpoint of the illumined soul. Failing to deny the reality of all entities save the Supreme Deity, theists reduce him to a limited creature with mortal imperfections like ours; while in the system of Absolutism the personal God will remain for all practical purposes as real as, nay, more real than, this phenomenal world of our experience, including our individual selves, although viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*. He will be merged, not into nothingness, but into the Absolute Ground of all existence. The saying of Sri Ramakrishna quoted disapprovingly by the author, that the same God manifests in the saint and the sinner alike can be justified from this standpoint alone. This

does not by any means do away with all differences in the practical field, thereby leaving no scope for morality as the author apprehends. On the other hand teachers of this sublime truth have one and all given all possible stress on strict moral life as the *sine-qua-non* for attaining this knowledge of complete divine immanence. And even after the dawn of light, the illumined soul can be known by others only by the life he lives—a life which never falls short of the highest ethical standards. Only his moral behaviour is quite spontaneous, flowing from his very nature while for an ordinary moralist ethical life means a ceaseless struggle.

As for the author's contention that personal God is a fact of experience and that the burden of proof to the contrary lies on those who object to it, we wonder how he fails to notice that a similar appeal to experience is made by the mystics too. How can he solve this conflict between the two types of experience? It is futile to attempt, as the author has done, to explain away the undesirable type of experience of the mystics as due to "auto-suggestion." For, the same theory of "auto-suggestion" has been applied to all religious events, including the theistic experiences, by the majority of psychologists. Therefore theists have to maintain their ground either by theoretical proof or by pragmatic argument either of which does not give theism any covetable advantage over its rival theories. On the other hand

Absolutism, if properly construed, is in a better position in so far as it can accommodate theism as well as other useful theories within its pale as so many working hypotheses, which, though not ultimate realities, may nevertheless be as much necessary for the spiritual growth of different individuals as food and drink for the maintenance of our physical existence.

#### IV. Salvation Of the World and Salvation From the World

Along with the conviction of the unreality of the world goes the other attitude—contempt for the world and therefore a longing for salvation from the world. This is according to our author a type of pessimism, though he agrees with Dr. Dasgupta in holding it to be “no ordinary form of pessimism.” Temperamentally optimistic as our author is, he cannot allow this fatal anti-social tendency, a morbid symptom of the Eastern mind, a place in his ideal religion of the future. He cannot agree with Sri Ramakrishna when the latter teaches one of his devotees to pray to God that his work in and for the world may be less, inasmuch as it makes him lose sight of God.

If work for humanity and communion with God do not seem compatible for some aspirants, what else can they do but give up one of the two pursuits? Perhaps our author will insist on the continuance of humanitarian activities even by sacrificing all religious aspiration whenever necessary. But if religion has a value distinctively its own—

and the author himself has admitted such a value—then why should not one pursue that even at the cost of the other values *in case of a conflict*? The entire history of religion all over the world, however, tells us that this withdrawal from the society is prescribed only as a *temporary measure*, necessary at the *stage of preparation*. That is why we find Buddha resorting to solitude, Jesus retiring into the wilderness, and almost all prophets and saints spending *at least a period of their life* in strict seclusion. But was not this temporary aloofness on their part, as a rule, for the better service of the world although these God-intoxicated souls might not have always been conscious of this ideal of service from the very start?

We like to draw our author's attention to the other side of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings. When Swami Vivekananda, his dearest disciple, expressed his desire to remain constantly absorbed in divine communion, the Master's sharp rebuke was, “Fie on you! I took you to be of much better stuff. But you too are so very self-seeking as to enjoy the bliss all alone rather than making others also sharers of it!” The world is well aware of the result of this reproof. Jesus's life-incidents, in so far as they are known, do not show that he was filled with the same spirit of service which became an outstanding feature of his later life after being possessed by the Holy Ghost. Service of humanity, nay,

of all beings, has been insisted upon by Hindu religion in all its phases as a necessary means to spiritual attainments. Again, it has been mentioned in the Hindu scriptures as a characteristic trait of all illumined souls. Even then why the Hindus are despised as pessimistic and anti-social is really an enigma. Perhaps the critics judge the faith by its degenerate forms only. But is it fair and honest? Where is an ideal in this world that has never been degraded?

### V. The Christ-ideal

As regards the author's reference to the Christ-ideal as the best contribution to the future world religion we gladly acknowledge our deepest regards for such a noble ideal as this. Though the historicity of Jesus may never be freed from controversy, nay, may be disproved altogether, yet the ideal will ever remain as a beacon-light guiding travellers in the field of spirituality. But at the same time it must be pointed out that other religions also are not entirely deprived of such grand ideals. Rare specimens of humanity like these, whatever be their historical and geographical settings, will always infuse dynamic vitality into our religious life and remain worthy objects of our worship. But let us not forget for a

moment, that there is ample space in the firmament of religion for more than one such star to shine forth side by side, so long as there remains an endless variety of human temperaments. In the light of pragmatism in its representational form, as accepted by the author, we may say, the various ideals represent the truth in its different aspects or degrees, or in other words, they reveal different paths leading to the same goal, i.e., perfect religious adjustment inasmuch as they have proved their worth in this respect by producing characters which are living symbols of spirituality.

The most perfect picture of a universal religion will therefore be one which will adequately provide for all our reasonable spiritual aspiration in all its richness of variety. Finally, it is, no doubt, our own religious life that will be the best guide to the better understanding of this vast region which is as yet so dimly perceived. What we desire to emphasise here is not "intellectual inertia or irresponsibility," but breadth of vision and openness of mind for receiving new truths and being aware of our own limitations, which alone can foster sympathy and spur us on towards further enlightenment.

---

## A HOUSEHOLDER SAINT AND POET OF KERALA

By M. S. Krishna Aiyar, B.A., B.L.

**H**ERE is the story of a householder saint who had very little of scholarship and much less of scriptural learning, who yet by "blind faith" and intense devotion realised God. To him Lord Krishna was always present in person and him the Lord saved from every difficulty and disgrace. Through his Bhakti he composed verses praising the Lord and inculcating the fundamental truths of the Vedānta. This Grihastha, Poonthānath Nambudiri, had his Illam<sup>1</sup> in a little village called Angādipuram near the famous Sri Krishna temple of Guruvāyur. He was a Nambudiri Brahmin belonging to the section not entitled to study and recite the Vedas<sup>2</sup>. He was a contemporary of Mepathur Bhattatiripad, the renowned author of the devotional poem "Narayaneeya." Poonthānam's life and work and especially his devotional experiences were closely associated with those of Bhattatiripad.

### Baby's Tragic End

As in the life of several other saints, it was a domestic calamity that made him a Virakta (renunciant) over and above his being by nature a Vishnu Bhakta. A long-

coveted first son was born to him. For the Annaprāsana ceremony<sup>3</sup> of the child several Antharjanams<sup>4</sup> had come on invitation. The child was sleeping in a dark corner and the ladies without noticing this, spread their portmanteaus over the bed of the child. When the auspicious hour for the ceremony approached, the mother with the idea of bathing the baby first, went to the spot and to her great sorrow and confusion picked up the child dead. The child had died of hard-breathing. The father's sorrow knew no bounds and he then composed the soul-stirring "Jnānappāna" (poem enabling one to acquire knowledge or Jnāna) in Malayalam. This poem is written in such sweet and simple style and with the heart of a true Virakta that it gives today solace to many a sorrow-stricken soul.

### Humbling of Scholar's Pride

After this misfortune Poonthānam spent most of his time in the Guruvāyur temple with his daily Snāna (bath), constant Japa, Pradakshina, and Namaskāra. Of this period of his life and his companionship with the Lord, many a story is being told today. It was at this time that Mepathur Bhattatiripad

1. The name by which a Nambudiri's house is known in Malabar.

2. Among Nambudiris there are two classes, the *Adhyans* and the *Anadhyans*, the former alone being considered fit to study and recite the Vedas.

3. The ceremony of the first feeding of the child with rice.

4. Name by which the Nambudiri ladies are called owing to their observance of the *Purdah*.

came to the Guruvāyur temple for worship and meditation. When the learned Bhattatiri began to compose his "Narayaneeyam," Poonthānam began his poem "Santhānagopālam" in Malayalam. Bhattatiri, the great scholar and the Ādhyān Nambudiri that he was, had a secret contempt towards the unschooled Anādhyaan Poonthānam, and Malayalam poetry in general. The innocent Poonthānam, unaware of this, one day placed his half-finished "Santhānagopālam" before Bhattatiri for perusal and correction of mistakes, if any. Bhattatiri exclaimed, "What is there for perusal or examination in Malayalam poetry? Can any one expect to see in it anything but mistakes? Moreover, Poonthānam, you have also no Vibhakti jñana (knowledge of the case endings) and so your poem must be full of mistakes only." When Bhattatiri said so much, in the presence and hearing of several others, Poonthānam out of sorrow and shame wept aloud and ran away to a corner of the temple. Suddenly a voice from the Garbhagriha (the sanctum sanctorum) was heard to say, "Though Poonthānam has not as much grasp of Vibhakti as Bhattatiri, yet he has in him greater Bhakti than the Bhattatiri." At this unexpected revelation Bhattatiripad hung down his head in shame and cursed himself for his egotism and went in search of the sorrow-stricken Nambudiri. Finding him out, Bhattatiri said consoling him, "Friend! are you weeping because I gave you

offence? At that time my mind was not free. I was thinking of other things. That you are a poet and your poetry is good have been amply proved and universally admitted when you composed your 'Jñānappāna' itself. Then, why take offence at my simply jocular remarks? Please give me your poem, I will certainly make the necessary corrections." Thus saying Bhattatiri read through the poem as far as it went, commended it and gladdened the heart of the Nambudiri.

### Vision of Vishnu's Abode

One day Poonthānam went to bed thinking of the best way of describing in his above poem, 'Vaikunta' whereunto Sri Krishna and Arjuna went. In a dream Guruvāyurappan (the presiding deity of Guruvāyur, Lord Krishna) showed him Vaikunta itself, and it is said that it was according to this vision that appeared before him that he described Vaikunta in his poem. It is also believed that Bhattatiri's "Narayaneeya" and this poet's "Santhānagopālam" were finished on one and the same day. Many a legend is current as to how Guruvāyurappan made others eat the humble pie to please this prince of devotees and place him in a superior position.

### Lord of Trees Too

Poonthānam was one day chanting "Vishnu Sahasranāma". As he was repeating the verse "Padmānābho' maraprabhuh," he broke the two portions and pronounced "Maraprabhuh" separately. A



learned Nambudiri who was close by, addressing Poonthānam said, "You fool ! Repeat the verse coalescing the two portions properly. It is not 'Maraprabhuh', it is 'Amara-prabhuh'." To the utter dismay of this corrector a voice emanated from the Garbhagriha : "Then who is Maraprabhuh ? I am Maraprabhuh too."\*

### Attested by the Lord Himself

The Bhagavata used to be read and interpreted in the Guruvāyur temple by very many eminent scholars and the practice continues even today. Though Poonthānam had not much knowledge of Sanskrit, yet his constant hearing of the Bhagavata interpreted, enabled him to give the meaning of any portion of the work and explain the same in the inimitable style of a real Bhakta with illustrations of his own. His exemplification full of Bhakti Rasa (devotion) attracted many an eager devotee and it came to be that, whoever might read, the interpreter was to be Poonthānam only. This excited the jealousy of many scholars, but as a matter of regular practice he alone occupied the place of the interpreter. On one occasion, in a large assemblage of learned men, that portion of the story relating to the marriage of Rukmini began to be read, and Poonthānam as usual continued his explanations. He said, "Rukmini said such and such things to the Brahmin messenger and despatched a letter through him to Sri

Krishna." The letter not having been mentioned in the Bhagavata, one from the audience questioned, "Where, in which Sloka is it said that a letter was sent ?" Poonthānam was flabbergasted and could not reply. But his never-failing companion, the Lord, came to his rescue. The voice from the Garbhagriha came out ringing, "In which Sloka is it said that no such letter was sent ? When that Brahmin came to Me he had also brought a letter from Rukmini." At this the questioner was at his wit's end. Poonthānam was much pleased and the rest were surprised beyond measure.

### Presence at Home henceforth

Poonthānam thereafter became the object of universal respect and he began to have the first place (the place of honour) in the temple feast held day by day, almost as a matter of right. One day a Nambudiripad, a renowned Vedādhyāyi, had come to the temple, and the manager in charge of the temple festivities had decided to offer the first seat to him. Poonthānam, not knowing this, occupied the first place as usual. Then the manager came and addressing him said, "Today a very learned and pious Brahmin has come here. It is not proper for you to occupy the first seat and so you must vacate." Poonthānam who was occupying the seat unquestioned for such a long time and that, with the approval of eminent personages, was naturally not inclined to vacate the seat. So the manager came and forcibly removed him by the hand.

\*Maram in Malayalam means a tree.

Poonthānam thought that he was subjected to this insult because of the inferiority in his not being fit to study the Vedas and his not being a man of much learning. He wept bitterly and went out of the temple. But how could he go without being comforted by the Lord? Then again the voice from the Garbhagriha came, "Oh Poonthānam, you should not hereafter live with these wicked men, nor need you come here to see Me. Whenever you desire I will be present before you at your Illam". With unbounded joy Poonthānam returned to his Illam.

#### **Grace from the Left**

As soon as he went there, he resolved that he would not eat his meal without seeing the Lord and quietly sat there. Then Lord Krishna, the great lover of Bhaktas, presented Himself in person at the Illam. The prince of devotees, seeing the Lord in flesh and blood at his left side, immediately rose up and prostrated before Him. The Lord said, "Hereafter, you offer prayers to Me only from here. You will have

My presence here at all times," and then disappeared. At the spot where the Lord was seen, Poonthānam built a Garbhagriha and within it consecrated an idol of Sri Krishna and began to offer regular worship. As the place where the Lord was seen, and consequently the temple was built, was to the left of the spot where Poonthānam sat, the temple was called "Edathupurath Ambalam" (the temple on the left side).

His constant touch with the Bhagavata and his intense devotion to the Lord enabled him in course of time to compose verses in Sanskrit too. It is opined by some that the famous "Sri Krishna Karnāmrita" is his work and that it relates to the Krishna of his Edathupurath Ambalam.

Nothing more than what is stated above is known about this great saint and poet, except that after settling down in his Illam he had several long lived-children through the grace of the Lord and that he passed his days happily with unswerving Bhakti and intense love towards Him.

---

## MOMENTS OF INTENSITY

*By Chandra, M.A.*

### A Curious Test

**I** had once the privilege of hearing the head of a section of Buddhists. He was disclosing to us the rather strange methods of initiation in vogue among them. Citing his own experience as an example, he said that his master first gave him to solve what would seem to us an impossible problem, "Reproduce before me the facial outline of the seventy eighth ancestor of yours". Given a problem of this kind the would-be disciple has to ponder over it day and night for a solution; and till he hits at the real one the master will ward him off as unripe for discipleship. The lecturer continued that the solution may dawn on him when he was least worrying his mind about it. "It may burst on him with all the splendour of a new revelation when he is seated in a public conveyance and looks at a wayside lamp-post or when he comes upon a child amusing himself alone. The glory of such a revelation came over me while I was gazing on a solitary flower in the chink of a ruined wall." The shock of such a sudden lifting up of the veil is of the nature of a poignant bliss. This time he knows he is right and the Guru too welcomes him to his care and initiates him into the mysteries of divine lore.

### Value of Unique Moments

Granting a fundamental difference of kind, the difference between the physical and the spiritual planes is essentially one of degree. Both of them obey the same inner logic; and the laws of cause and effect and of the results of action and effort hold good as much in the one as in the other.

Such experiences referring themselves to particular unique moments in life, and forming as it were the bright spots in a life of monotonous grey, though rare, are not impossible. Every moment which culminates in an act of physical exertion or a tension of mood or which is lit up with a rare intensity of emotion is precisely analogous to the experience narrated above. The human mind is not a mere camera reacting faithfully to every experience that besets it. It has its own vagaries and indulges in its own choice idiosyncrasies of mood. The play of light and shade thus varies infinitely from person to person and though the common experiences of life are roughly the same in all cases, the life of each individual is a tangle of mixed yarn, an irregular mass with protruding angularities and outstanding experiences.

Thus the life of man is not of an even tenor, but is the result of a million separate and smaller expe-

riences, most of which, conforming as they do to the uninteresting monotony of a daily routine, are scarce worth remembering. The tendency therefore is to reckon up the final value of a life in the light of a few unique moments and outstanding achievements rather than by a scrutiny at the basic trifles that form the major share of our lives. In the realm of the spirit too, which is conterminous with our physical life, one judges a life-long spiritual career by referring to the unique moments in the journey of the spirit. It is not our task to decide whether such a reckoning is just. We are concerned with these moments alone. It is but logical to infer that the more intense and the more frequent such moments are, the greater has been the general rigour of the life.

### **Reminders of Our Distant Home**

Such moments may savour either of joy or sorrow. They may intuitively refer us to an infinite good or a diabolic evil. For better or for worse they have in them sparks of a vital energy over which we have no control. Externally they may be of the smallest magnitude, mere trifles; but within them is shut up an almost volcanic power. They overwhelm us in their mighty swoop on us, and their power of transmutation is miraculous. Coming as they do with no effort on our part, and gripping us when we are least aware of them, these experiences are more or less divine visitations waking up memories of the

Distant Home in our minds. The voice is ringing in our ears day and night. In the midst of our pleasures and joys, in the midst of worldly things we think that we have forgotten everything else; then comes a moment's pause and the voice rings in our ears 'Give up all that thou hast and follow Me, whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it.'

### **Experienced by the Ripe Alone**

But such moments are not for every one. They dawn only on the select and chosen few. The crimson flush of the rose does not stir the same happy feelings in one and all. Only in the heart of a lonely poet does it set vibrating strange chords of harmony. So also, these moments carry their blessed power of redemption only to those who are ripe for being initiated into the divine mysteries. The power of the man and the power of the moment are full and all that is necessary is to join the two. To the man rushing at topspeed down a precipitous incline, the mere stumble over a stone is enough to hurl him headlong into certain death. These trifling external accidents form the proverbial last straw and set fire to mines and mines of explosives beneath.

One word of wondering and heartfelt counsel from the lips of his beloved was enough to transmute that arch-voluptuary, Leela Suka, into the most ardent devotee of the Lord!

The mere sight of old age and death was enough to rouse the latent divinity of the Buddha, and send him to grapple with the mystery of life, renouncing all the pleasures of the palace.

A few words of tolerance from the Godman of Dakshineswar turned that Bohemian and libertine, Girish Chandra Ghosh, into the greatest devotee.

A great monk's formal initiation into the life of the Sannyasin savours of the same simple yet mysterious touch. He saw an old beggar-woman weeping bitterly over a handful of rice scattered on the dust by an unheeding stranger who brushed past her carelessly. The experience was too much for him. The world appeared to him sheer devil's play, and in a short time he turned monk.

A still more amusing story is told of the person, who came to Swami Vivekananda and was feeling restless, from what cause he himself was not aware of. But the great moment had come for him. Swamiji clapped him on the shoulder and said simply, "You want to renounce the world and you don't know it." No doubt the person turned a monk.

It was the purest of chances that wrought the whole change in the life of Sister Christine. She had planned and made ready to go on a tour when through a pure whim she stayed to hear Swami Vivekananda. But for that moment!

Examples without number! They all alike show that the Lord's mercy droppeth where it 'listeth.'

### Unlike Hedonists and Æsthetes

In talking of these single moments of rare experience it would seem as if we are treading the same ground as the Hedonists and the Æsthetes. Their aim in life too is to enjoy as many as possible of these exquisite moments at their sweetest. But really, these moments of sensual apprehension have nothing in common with those of the spiritual aspirant. The Æsthete enjoys such moments in and for themselves. They are ends in themselves and lead nowhere. Again the world of the Æsthete is circumscribed and bound up within the narrow limits of a human life. In contrast to these, the realm of the spirit is infinite, and these moments are only the means to a greater end.

The essential value of these single experiences lies in that they stabilise and increase the general intensity of our lives. They are of the nature of spiritual stimuli.

### What Intensity Can Do

It is this question of the intensity of our normal life that Vivekananda deals with so often. The supreme message of the Upanishads to him is the one word 'strength' which is synonymous with what we have been calling 'Intensity.' He had greater hopes of those who live their lives intensely though badly, because there is a chance that in case any change for the better

dawns on them, the reformation in their lives will be as violent and thorough; whereas the white-livered person identifying himself half-heartedly to a thousand different details can be led nowhere. According to the Upanishads each soul is potentially divine, and sooner or later each particle must attain its liberation. It is only a question of time. But it is here that the question of intensity has such a great share of effect. The great prophets of the world in the span of a single life cover the same ground which the ordinary soul takes millions of cycles of births and deaths to cover, and all because of the unique intensity with which they live each moment of their lives.

Hence such moments find their logical culmination in the state of

final beatitude resulting from the realisation of the Supreme. A measure of the normal intensity of the daily life of such an one as Sri Ramakrishna can be had when we consider the trifling nature of the external factors that thrilled him into a superconscious state of God realisation. A song from Narendra, a look at a holy picture, the mere mention of the Divine Mother, the sight of a string of cranes winging across the blue—these were enough to throw him into Samadhi. And what is more wonderful still, this tremendous God-intensity was so much a part and parcel of his very physical frame, that the mere touch of a coin was sufficient to throw him into paroxysms of physical agony. Such a state reminds us of St. Francis of Assisi when he received the stigmata.

---

### Answering Voice Within

<b>W</b> HY, Oh why hast Thou, my Lord,	Punishment, callest it, thou wayward mind?
Deemed it fit to leave me thus	Can ever my Lord's gift a punishment be?
Stranded alone in this barren land?	'Tis but a blessing; and such true Faith mine
E'en prisoners have claim to know their crime, my Lord,	That were He to put me e'en to the sorest trials,
Why leavest me in ignorance if fault I have done?	One and only one thought shall abide in my breast—
Knowing, Thy punishment shall I more meekly bear.	Beloved, I am Thine, Thine ever, my own!

*Infant*

---

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### A Note on Gita, Ch. I

Prof. D. S. Sarma, M.A., author of *A Primer of Hinduism* and of other valuable books on the Hindu religion, makes some interesting comments on Arjuna's arguments contained in the first chapter of the Gita.

"A casual reader of the Gita," writes he, "is apt to look upon the first chapter as a mere scaffolding and thus miss its true significance. But to understand the full import of the teaching that follows, we should clearly grasp the position of Arjuna and pay particular attention to the points that emerge out of his argument in the beginning." The points the Professor wishes to be noticed are these :—

(1) Arjuna speaks at first only of the consequences of his action and not of its inherent rightness. And when he does raise the question of rightness he uses specious arguments.

(2) He speaks constantly of his own clan. The word *Swajana* occurs four times in his speech. It is significant that he speaks of his duty to his clan but not of his duty to his country or to his subjects. He speaks like a communalist.

(3) His conception of Dharma is mechanical and lifeless and consists in mere external rules. In refreshing contrast is the conception of Dharma with its vast spiritual background that is revealed in the Gita.

(4) He does not raise the question of non-violence as a method of warfare. He raises only the ques-

tion of self-centred action and its consequences.

\* \* \*

### Critical but not Hostile Eye

In our last issue we published a few excerpts from the book 'A Search in Secret India' \* by Paul Brunton, an English journalist who visited India to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of the spiritual wisdom of this country. Mr. Brunton paints fascinating pictures of Indian life and right through the book we find a sincerity of approach and a capacity to understand points of view, preferences and tastes that are often alien and at times antagonistic to an average Westerner's mental make-up. The author's scientific training and commonsense attitude compelled him, he says, 'to keep a critical but not hostile eye,' widely open wherever he went. His scepticism came often into sharp conflict with his spiritual sensitivity. Yet it did not blind him to facts of real experience.

### Miracles Also Obey Laws

Mr. Brunton has observed many phenomena for scientists to investigate. Science does not ignore facts, but strange happenings are *also* facts ; they are not to be thrust away as miracles. When we cannot explain a phenomenon under the known laws of nature we unfortunately damn it by labelling it as miracle. But in the words of St. Augustine, miracles do not happen 'in contradiction to nature, but only in contradiction to what is

---

\*Published by Messrs. Rider & Co., Paternoster House, London E. C. 4. Price 15sh.

known to us of nature.' A truly scientific person must keep an open mind and must be prepared to weigh all evidence, enlarge the scope of knowledge and arrive at generalisations that should take in all facts that are impartially observed, to determine the truth behind,—a truth that is not the private possession of a select few only but which can stand all tests of science.

### Emptiness Only in Him who Damns

Although Mr. Brunton had to wade through "a welter of crass superstition, incredible impostures, and ancient pretensions" he remarks :

"Those who close their minds to the entrance of all Eastern ideas, close them also to fine thoughts, deep truths and worthwhile psychological knowledge. Whoever will poke about this musty lore of the Orient in the hope of finding some precious gem of strange fact and stranger wisdom will find his quest no vain one."

"When Orientalists like Burnouf, Colebrooke and Max Muller appeared upon learning's scene and brought us some of the literary treasures of India, the savants of Europe began to understand that the heathens who inhabited that country were not so stupid as our own ignorance had presumed." "Those clever people who profess to find Asiatic learning empty of all useful thoughts for the West thereby prove their own emptiness. Those practical persons who fling the epithet 'stupid' at its study, succeed only in flinging it at their own narrow-mindedness. If our ideas about life are to be wholly determined by mere accident of space, by the chance that we were born in Bristol instead of Bombay, then we are

not worthy of the name of civilised man."

The Hatha Yogi of Madras, the magician from Egypt and the wonder-worker of Benares gave him sufficient intimations of an empire of reality that has yet to be annexed by the investigations of science. That men of science are not averse to meet this new situation which an array of facts observed by the *normally-minded* has brought to the forefront, is clearly evident from the new association formed in London for an impartial inquiry into psychic phenomena by persons who are scientists, doctors and professors of psychology. This new association is sponsored into activity in an informal manner by no less an academic body than the University of London. We trust that this book of Mr. Brunton will attract their attention.

### Possibilities of Hatha Yoga

From the anchorite of Adyar river Mr. Brunton learnt the secret of the Indian system of Hatha Yoga. "Our Yoga exercises," the hermit correctly informed his visitor, "are really poses and require no further movements after the pose has been taken up. Instead of seeking more energy with which to be active, we seek to increase the power of endurance," and he cautions Mr. Brunton, "These benefits come only if the exercise is done in *our* (italics are ours) way and not in your hasty Western manner." Mr. Brunton concludes his remarks on Hatha Yoga with an apt recognition of the value of a system that has only of late begun to attract votaries from the West. Even in India organised attempts are being made on laboratory research basis to study the system of Hatha Yoga. Swami Kuvalayananda's institution at Lonavla, Prof. K. V. Iyer and



Mr. Sundaram of Bangalore and the Chief of Oundh are all names which every Indian interested in the modern developments of this indigenous system is well aware of. Very pertinently Mr. Brunton remarks :

"The average Englishman is so apt to regard the average Indian as a weakling, as an enervated product of tropical sun and underfeeding, that it surprises one to learn that such a carefully thought out native system of physical culture has existed in India since antiquity.....Perhaps if the West with its thorough methods of scientifically directed research, would pick some dust-covered practices out of the traditional teaching of Yoga, we might arrive at a completer knowledge of our bodies and a fuller regime of healthy life."

### **Stress on Test of Personal Experience**

From what has been said above one should not be under the impression that Mr. Brunton was attracted only by the physical endurance feats of Brahma, the psychic exhibits of Mohammed Bey and the miracles of Vishuddhananda. The author was out to discover and experience the still deeper side of life. Our thought-tortured brain creates numerous *meta*-physical problems and imprisons intellect within its own barricades of perpetual interrogations. In every Mumukshu there is an infinite yearning for the Infinite and he wants a way out. In the very beginning of the book the author has announced his plan of campaign. "What is the truth behind the fitful hints which reach us intimating that there exists in India an old wisdom that promises the most extraordinary development of mental powers to those who practise it?" He says he has a scientific

training and is as a matter of fact most rational in his outlook. He is not religious in the accepted sense of the term. Intellectual proofs of one system over another have made him tired and he has become sceptical of everything "which cannot be proved by personal experience." He does not want to be the depository of other people's doctrines.

Applying his tests he found that the Parsi Messiah, Meher Baba, was not up to his expectations. He devotes two chapters for Meher Baba. To him the story of Meher Baba provides a "handy illustration of the strength and defect in Indian character. India suffers from the defects of an illiterate and over-religious race, untrained in those scientific modes of thought which demand the divorce of emotion from reason, history from hearsay, and fact from imagination."

### **Eulogy on Dayalbagh**

Mr. Brunton, on the other hand, devotes a very informing chapter to describe his visit to Dayalbagh in Agra, the headquarters of the Sat-Sangis, of the Radhasoami cult. He was much impressed by the unique powers of organisation of Sahibji Maharaj, their leader, and in the growing industrial town of Dayalbagh he sees an answer to the economic problems of this country. He has not however critically gone into the problem and discussed how far a system, however much it might take after a Western pattern, can be a model for *all* India, if it is built on *theocratic* foundations. Anyway the experiment is really novel, and he finds in Dayalbagh "a curious mixture of American alertness and practicality, British predilection for correct conduct and Indian devoutness and contemplativeness."

### **Most Impressed by Ramana Maharshi**

For a person with the intellectual equipment and spiritual sensitiveness of Mr. Brunton, it is no wonder that the Sage of Tiruvannamalai made the strongest appeal. In the June issue of this magazine we had published portions from a letter of a friend who records his impressions of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Our friend's critical outlook and Mr. Brunton's are materially the same. We can unhesitatingly say that the three chapters he devotes to depict the character and personality of Ramana Maharshi form the most interesting portion of his travel diary. Sir Francis Young-husband who has written a nice foreword to the book has also drawn the reader's attention to this fact. The author makes an honest confession of faith when he says "I feel that in the Maharshi I have met the most mysterious personality whom life has yet brought within the orbit of my experience."

### **Come to Reveal, not to Argue**

Again in another place he says :

"It seems to me that the presence of men like Maharshi ensures the continuity down history of a divine message from regions not easily accessible to us all. It seems to me further that one must accept the fact that such a sage comes to reveal something to us, not to argue anything with us. At any rate his teachings make a strong appeal to me, for his personal attitude and practical method, when understood, are

quite *scientific* in their way. He brings no supernatural power and demands no blind religious faith. .... He avoids the dark and debatable waters of wizardry, in which so many promising voyages have ended in shipwreck. He simply puts forward a way of self-analysis, which can be practised irrespective of any ancient or modern theories or beliefs which one may hold, a way that will finally lead man to true self-understanding."

In another place he candidly remarks, "I have to admit, in answer to my inner questioner, that he is the one man, who has impressed me more than any other person I have ever met, whether in the East or West."

### **Need for more of Honest Pictures**

After a fruitful stay of some eventful weeks, Mr. Brunton returned to his native land and in his heart of hearts he yearns to come back to India and dedicate himself for a deeper understanding of the Self, and bask for some more time under the spiritual radiance of one who is recognised by many as a Jivanmukta and a Brahmajnani. Visits from men like our friend will undoubtedly go a long way to bridge these two mighty streams of culture, of the East and of the West. We have great pleasure in unhesitatingly recommending this brilliant record of Mr. Brunton's travels to be read by all lovers of India. As a piece of literature giving graphic pictures of Indian life, this book has few compeers.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: ARGUMENTS, TEACHINGS, PRACTICES:** *By Michael D. Lyons I. G., Light of the East Office, 30, Park Street, Calcutta.*

This booklet aims to be a skeleton outline "of the principal arguments for the truth of the Catholic Church, some of the most striking teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ and the main beliefs and practices of the Catholics." Such a short book as this will be gladly welcomed by the faithful Catholic population, especially at this time when many cannot expect to have the necessary leisure to master the voluminous literature that has sprung up round the "holy Church." How it will appeal to the non-Catholics and those Catholics who have disinherited all that Catholicism has offered except the denomination they chance to belong to by birth, we are not in a position to judge precisely. Critical literature brought out by innumerable counter-movements headed by men counted among the greatest of thinkers and reformers, has evaluated the claims of the "only infallible Church" within the last five centuries. It is not necessary here to examine the truth and excellence of the Catholic tenets; nor can the age-long quarrel existing between enlightened reason and sectarian dogma be settled in a trice.

Nevertheless we would like to make a note of the following facts that have struck us. History has given sufficient warnings to cry halt as soon as bigotry and fanaticism cease to afford any motive force for some universal good. It is a pity that in spite of these millenniums of enlightenment there are many who overlook this warning. Each and every one has full and legitimate right to "prove" the excellence of his faith in the light of his "Biblical Science." But when one tries to rate other's faiths by odious comparisons one forgets the demands of equity. The author of this booklet attributes the

reported miracles by Hindu ascetics to natural causes and Catholic miracles to suspension of laws by the power of God. But if natural causes explain a phenomenon why should it be counted a miracle at all? However, it may be remembered that Hinduism is not out on proving its truth by miracles and "registered cures." Miracles are cried down in Hindu scriptures as a stumbling block in the path of a religious aspirant.

At another place in the booklet, the author's incapacity to grasp the significance of the Maya doctrine of the Hindus is sadly evident. Christ, he says, was "not an Avatar bearing a form assumed in Maya to win love but a real man born as a tender infant feeling the cold of a winter's stable, thirsty and hungry, often despised and persecuted..... the true Kalki." Exactly because of this very nature, the Hindus would choose to call an Avatar a manifestation in the realm of Maya. The word "real" is understood by Hindus as beyond change and decay. The logical mind of a Hindu revolts at the idea of compromising between a mutable human form, heir to hunger and thirst, and the everlasting Reality. Hence the recognition of a relative Reality in the realm of cause and effect (Maya).

There are such other statements which the reader of this booklet may easily discover. None can be fair in making comparisons with a shallow and biased study of other scriptures.

However the reading public should be thankful to the learned author for the valuable contribution which he has laid within the reach of all so that those who are interested in the subject may easily get from it a very clear notion about Roman Catholicism.

T. C.

**INDIA IN THE MAKING:** *By Swami Ayyaktananda, Ramakrishna Ashrama, Patna. Pages 144.*

The subject matter of this book originally appeared in the *Morning Star* of Patna and the *Prabuddha Bharata*.

India is passing through troubled days and very many schemes are in the air. Most of these are mainly imitative; for the glare of the West is too great to be resisted. "India in the Making" comes in time with a clear message. Though the author seems to advocate modern humanism as is practised in the West, still he has insisted on adhering to the spiritual ideal. Our religion and our social order, he rightly observes, have survived many a catastrophe and vicissitude because of the universal features latent in them. It would be foolishness on our part to give up all the achievements of the past and begin from the beginning.

For a book of its size, the present volume gives a vast amount of information and food for thought. There is not one aspect of life, spiritual or secular, which has not been touched by the author. A comparative study of Eastern and Western ideas on Religion, Philosophy, Art, Politics and Social Order has been made and their histories have been traced from very early times. In this respect it will prove a useful reference book. In the end the author gives his constructive programme after duly considering (1) the spiritual ideal, (2) the remnants of India's past institutions and (3) the noblest achievements and the new experiments of the modern West.

N. R.

THE BHAMATI CATUSSUTRI: (with Sankara's Commentary) Translated into English by Mr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, M. A., B. Sc. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Mr. C. Kunhan Raja, M. A., D. Phil. (Oxon), Head of the Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

To get a clear idea of the knowledge of Brahman one should study the Upanishads and the Vedanta Sutras which give a synthetic and harmonious view of the teachings of the former. The aphorisms are too abstruse to be

comprehended by the independent labour of even the finest intellect. Acharya Sankara has therefore done a signal service to India and the world by writing a commentary, exhaustive, clear, forceful and rational at the same time—a commentary which has won for him the name of Bhashyakara and the approbation of Eastern and Western savants like Max Muller, Deussen and others. How unfathomably deep and grand—*Prasanta Gambhiram*—the intellect of Sankara was, is incomprehensible without diving into the ocean of his learned writings. And without the help of a diver it will be impossible for us to bring to the surface the peerless pearls that are contained within its vast bosom.

Among the many annotators of the Acharya, the name of Vachaspati Misra, the author of Bhamati, stands pre-eminent. With his far-reaching and searching intellect he has laid bare the full import of many difficult aspects of Sankara's wonderful philosophy. Catussutri, or the first four Sutras, form the keynote of his teachings. The first Sutra hints that the teachings of Vedanta would be fruitful only to those who have qualified themselves by rooting out worldly desires, and possess a sincere longing for the knowledge of Brahman, or the Absolute for its own sake. Those who want to make it a mere intellectual pastime are, so to say, debarred from entering the sanctum sanctorum of its magnificent temple. The remaining aphorisms deal with the nature of the Deity and with the ways and means of attaining Him and with His relation to the whole universe consisting of animate and inanimate objects. He is Eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. All that we see within and without us spring out of Him and go back to Him at the time of dissolution. He is the *causa sui*. The scriptures, which are the storehouse of spiritual laws discovered by the seers, all point to Him who is One, but who is called differently. Scientists call It Matter, spiritual men call It Self or Brahman.

In translating Sankara's Commentary on these Sutras and side by side

presenting the work of Vachaspati Misra, in a clear, faithful and orthodox style, the Editors have done an invaluable service to the cause of Vedanta. The usefulness of the volume has been considerably enhanced by a learned and critical Introduction and by the addition of elaborate and exhaustive Notes. These reveal how vast and thorough is the knowledge of the translators in the domain of Eastern and Western philosophy. The fundamental ideas of Vachaspati on the authoritativeness of scripture without being detrimental to the interest of reason and science, have been dealt with in a masterly way with brilliant references

to the logical theory of Bradley, Bosanquet etc. Primal Nescience with its location, Isvara as the creator of the world, Release emotional and absolute, and lastly Jivanmukti or the nature of a realised soul, have all been discussed with remarkable clearness.

The arrangement of the Sanskrit texts and English translations, and indeed the entire get up, are praiseworthy, while the elaborate Notes at the end would be found highly useful by those who wish to make a detailed study. We heartily recommend the volume to all scholars and learners, both Oriental and Occidental.

S. A.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Opening of the Ramakrishna Ashram in Karachi

For some time past various Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order were visiting Karachi on lecture tours at the invitation of a few ardent devotees. Now owing to the philanthropy of some citizens of Karachi amongst whom are Principal Gokhale, Prof. Junnarkar, Seths Rochiram Thakurdas, Nanoobhai Doongurse, Mr. Nagarkar and others, it has been possible to start an Ashram in a rented bungalow behind the Sind Tilo Factory in the Garden Quarter. At present there are only two Swamis resident there, chief of them being Swami Sharvananda.

The opening ceremony of the Ashram took place on Friday the 15th June. The programme of the day was divided into two parts, viz: the religious observances in the morning from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. accompanied by Bhajan, Puja, etc., and public lectures by leading citizens of Karachi in the evening in the Theosophical Society's Hall.

After devotional songs sung by one of the monks of the Ashram the proceedings of the evening were opened by Mr. F. J. Ginwalla of Bombay with a short speech wherein he recounted the rise and development of the Bombay branch of the Ashram during the last

eleven years since its start by the same Swami. He hoped that the seed which was being planted that day in Karachi would in course of time grow into a tree of life and afford shelter to the weary seeking happiness and peace.

He was followed by Principal Gokhale who, referred to the work of the Ramakrishna Mission in America and appealed to the citizens of Karachi, especially the younger generation, to take full advantage of the presence of the Swamis amongst them.

Principal Butani, the next speaker narrated how he first made acquaintance of the Mission in Brindaban and Rishikesh, where he found "a few stalwart and tall Swamis engaged in the work of affording relief to the cholera and flood-stricken people of those parts." Referring to the universality of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's religion and his intense love of God, he said that an Ashram started under such auspices would not fail to radiate love, happiness and bliss in their city.

Professor Junnarkar in a telling and nice little speech referred to an incident in the lives of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sadhu Hiranand, in which the Sadhu, while still a young man at the threshold of his public career, ran to Calcutta on hearing that Sri Rama-

krishna was lying ill on his death bed. Sadhu Hiranand had an interview with the Paramahansa at the end of which, as an unsophisticated child that he was, he desired to visit the country of Sadhu Hiranand. Although it was not possible for the Paramahansa to visit Sind when on this earth, the speaker was glad that it had been possible after a lapse of about 50 years to have his emissaries to fulfil the great wish of the Master before he passed into Samadhi.

Swami Sharvananda spoke next. He said that Sri Ramakrishna is not merely a personality but a principle. In this land God has from time to time sent Teachers who not only preached the eternal verities but showed by their example how to realise them. The fact that such Teachers have taken birth in India from time to time shows that our country is not dead as an entity although it has become a subject nation for centuries. India has still a mission to give to the world and it is to show how spiritual values are ultimately more important in the life of nations as well as in those of individuals. The West has no doubt conquered the East and has sought to master and domineer over it; but India has also her conquests to make. Unlike those of the West, however, her conquests are those of the brute in man. Today the world needs the teachings of India and that is why great minds of the West like Max Muller, Romain Rolland and others have not failed to appreciate our spiritual heritage. He then briefly referred to the part played by the various Math and Mission centres in spreading the cultural and spiritual mission of India.

Proceeding, the Swami said that the last time he went to Karachi, some of the prominent gentlemen impressed upon him the necessity of establishing an Ashram in Karachi. An Ashram was now an accomplished fact, and he was glad, he said, that in his efforts he was very much assisted by the co-operation and self-sacrifice of a few friends who were good enough to contribute financially for its upkeep.

### Ramakrishna Mission's Relief Work in Assam

We have opened three relief centres, viz., Jhingabari, Bilajuri, and Bangsikunda in the flood-affected areas in Sylhet, and two others, viz., Dharamtul and Fulaguri in the district of Nowgong. Pressing appeals for help have compelled us since then to increase considerably the number of villages within the jurisdiction of all our centres. Altogether 974 mds. 29 srs. 8 chs. of rice were distributed among 6248 recipients of 114 villages until August 7, besides 407 pieces of new clothes and 16 pieces of old ones. A small quantity of *Chira* and molasses was also distributed in some cases.

Along with the distribution of food-stuffs, distribution of cloth, paddy seeds and supply of capital money to the able-bodied youths and widows to help them to restart their hereditary occupations, have however now become an immediate necessity. Our small distributions in these directions are too inadequate to meet the urgent demands. Our funds are well-nigh exhausted.

Our relief work in Behar is still going on from Monghyr and Motihari. As the latter district has been recently subject to floods, we have to give fresh necessary relief there. We are also having petitions from other parts to start relief works. But the paucity of our funds does not allow us to undertake fresh work. Our total collection for this relief work is Rs. 1,12,950-13-9 and total disbursement Rs. 1,11,067-10-0 leaving only a small balance with us.

We therefore earnestly appeal to our generous friends to stretch their accustomed helping hands once again to relieve the sufferings of the people of Assam.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math (Howrah).

(Sd.) VIRAJANANDA,

Secretary.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

OCTOBER, 1934

[No. 6

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

आश्रमेषु चतुर्धर्तुर्दममेवोत्तमः व्रतम् ।  
तस्य लिङ्गानि वक्ष्यामि येषां समुदयो दमः ॥  
जमा श्रुतिर्हिंसा च समता सत्यमार्जवम् ।  
इन्द्रियान्मिजयो दाक्ष्यं माह्वं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥  
अकार्पण्यमसंरम्भः सन्तोषः प्रियवादिता ।  
अविहिंसानमृया चाप्येषां समुदयो दमः ॥

It has been said that in all the four stages of life (beginning with the student and ending with the Sannyasin (the man of perfect renunciation), self-control is the best of vows. I shall now tell thee those indications whose sum total is self-control.

Forgiveness, patience, abstention from injury, impartiality, truth, sincerity, conquest of the senses, cleverness, mildness, modesty, steadiness, liberality, freedom from wrath, contentment, sweetness of speech, benevolence and absence of malice—the union of all these is what is meant by self-control.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CLX, 14 and 16)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*The Present Racial Degeneration  
of the Hindus due to Non-observance  
of Continence in Married Life*

**A**LTHOUGH the scriptures tell us that there is such a noble purpose in married life, how many of us even think of it nowadays? How many are there who observe Brahmacharya in married life and thereby ennoble their own lives as well as the life of the society? How many wives stand by their husbands and encourage them to engage in humanitarian activities, not to speak of spiritual pursuits? How many husbands hold renunciation as the goal of their lives and teach the same to their wives? Alas! India, think for a moment how Western materialism with its out and out hedonistic outlook has slowly crept into your flesh and bones and degraded you to the level of brutes, without any moral backbone! It was not for nothing that the Master would show to his monastic disciples the present evils of married life with the remark: "If enjoyment becomes condemnable when regarded as all important and as the goal of life, then can it be justified merely because it is accepted with a *formal ceremony*?" Does the ceremony make the base outlook sacred and free from all defects? It is really doubtful whether the slavery of the senses

in married life did ever become so acute in India as it is found in these days! We have almost entirely forgotten that apart from sense enjoyment, marriage has a noble and sacred ideal. As a result we are becoming day by day even worse than brutes. The great Master's marriage was for raising the young men and women of India from this level of animals. Like all other events in his life, his marriage also took place for the good of others.

*The Master's Marriage meant  
for reviving the Noble Ideal behind  
it by showing it in His Own Life*

The Master would say, "Whatever is done here (*i. e.*, by him) is for your sake. If I do good deeds, you may be inclined to imitate at least one-sixteenth of them; and if I do anything wrong you are likely to do the same hundredfold." That is why the Master took upon his shoulders the responsibilities of married life, and showed to the world the grand ideal through his own practice. Had not the Master himself married, his householder critics might have remarked that he could talk so glibly of continence and preach such noble ideals only because he himself was not a married man and did not live with his wife.



*The Master's unprecedented relation of Pure Love with his wife Undeified by any Physical Reference was meant for a Grand Ideal to be followed by Householders*

Escaping from such adverse criticism was not the only reason for the Master's marriage. When after the full vision of the Divine Mother, the God-intoxicated state became quite natural to him, he had his wife brought over to him at Dakshineswar and offered himself at her feet, directly realising the presence of the Mother of the Universe in her. Henceforth, for full eight months he always lived with her, and after that period too, would occasionally go to Kamarpukur or his father-in-law's house at Jayrambati and spend a month or two there in her company for her training and satisfaction.

Even to this day the Holy Mother thus recounts at length before her lady disciples, those blissful days she spent at Dakshineswar in close touch with the Master : "The divine state which the Master used to live in, passes all description. In that ecstatic mood he would smile or weep, or at times remain perfectly still in deep Samadhi. This would continue throughout the night. At the sight of that divine presence my whole body would tremble with awe, and I would anxiously look for the coming of the dawn. I knew nothing of ecstasy in those days. One night his Samadhi continued for a long time. I was greatly afraid and sent for Hriday (the Master's

nephew and constant attendant) who came and began to repeat the name of the Lord before the Master. After a while his external consciousness reappeared. After this incident, finding me constantly troubled with fear, he himself taught me in which state of Samadhi which name of God was to be repeated. Thenceforth I would not get so much frightened as he would invariably come round with the repetition of those names. Later, one day, he came to know that even after the lapse of a considerable time I could not adapt myself to his ecstatic states and had to keep awake whole nights, and therefore asked me to sleep separately in the concert room." The Holy Mother also describes how the Master taught her on the one hand, minute details of worldly wisdom, such as how to keep household articles in proper order, what the nature of each member of the family was, how she should move with every one of them, in which manner she should behave with persons other than the relations, and so forth ; and on the other hand, gave detailed instructions about matters spiritual, beginning from prayers and devotion, meditation and Samadhi, to the highest knowledge of Brahman.

How many of the common run of men impart such all-round training to their wives ? How many husbands will be able to retain unimpaired throughout life loving considerations for their wives if the physical relations existing among

them disappear from today for some reason or other? That is why we maintain that the marriage of this unique divine incarnation, this unprecedented spiritual relation he had with his wife, was wholly for the sake of other human beings. He entered into it so that people might learn from his example that marriage has got a motive much higher than mere satisfaction of the senses. It has a noble ideal which people *can follow* in their turn by observing continence in married life to the best of their capacity. They can thereby make themselves worthy citizens and be parents of worthy children, possessed of noble qualities for the rene-

ration of Indian Society from its present state of degradation. This ideal,—not required to be shown in olden days in the lives of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Sankara, Chaitanya and others—has thus been set forth in the life of Ramakrishna to fulfil a vital need of the day. It is for the first time in the history of the world that such a novel and perfectly pure model of married life has been formed, as the outcome of life-long spiritual practices and austere penances. Now, as the Master would say, let people cast their own lives into this ideal mould and shape them accordingly.

## THE MOOD THAT READS ARIGHT

**WE** propose to show in the following pages under what conditions the Argala, Kilaka and Kavacha as well as the Chandi prepare the ground for higher meditations.

### Place of Chanting in General Scheme

It is not claimed at all that these are the only steps prescribed for the beginner. Upasana or worship itself is but one of the many methods that help to harmonise the personality, when followed according to the instructions of those who have attained success through it. Even in the matter of this Upasana there are many varieties open to the sincere aspirant. Any aspect of Divinity, conceived of as male or female, would serve as an excellent

“object” for fixing the attention, for the regulation of emotional outflow or for the dedication of all work, physical or mental. Devotees of the Divine Mother, in their turn, have also a wide choice before them. If they are capable of it, they can hold their body and mind in such an active yet quiescent and waiting mood as to make themselves channels for the welfare of all creatures, and enjoy what they might prefer to call an unbroken union with Shakti or the Mother of the universe. Less advanced seekers might be engaged in purifying their outlook by performing mental worship of the Mother at stated times, and by endeavouring during other times to carry on their daily activities with the feeling

that they are being watched, corrected and cheered by Her throughout. When such control has not been attained, the devotee can seat himself before any convenient symbol of the Mother and conduct regular worship with flowers, incense and the like according to his means, elaborately or on a small scale. In these cases it is certainly not the quantity of the offering that matters, but the spirit with which it is served, even a solitary leaf, flower or a few drops of water being accepted by the Most High when gathered and given with true devotion. Whatever be the Ideal chosen, it is customary for the devotee to spend some time after regular worship, trying to feel as intensely as possible that the Deity is in a gracious mood or has already assumed an attitude of benediction. Actual experiment will convince any one that the easiest way of generating and developing this feeling is to revolve in the mind diverse situations in which votaries were granted the vision beatific and its refraction in the material world in the shape of the blessings they desired. It is precisely here that the value of chanting or recitation comes in. For when carried on with attention and a proper understanding of the passages selected, these simple exercises must result in a continuous memory of sacred scenes and in the awakening of the correct attitude. This is why chanting or recitation is considered an almost indispensable item in the spiritual discipline of the beginner,

and is resorted to with great reverence even by advanced seekers.

### **Anything Novel and Elevating ?**

Here it might be objected that this is quite right in theory but that experience contradicts it. For we do often come across many who go through the Chandi, and instead of getting into a reverent mood, actually lay it aside finding it dull and disgusting. To them it appears to be simply a story of a few battles about whose termination one can safely make a prediction without reading up to the end. The gods who went in procession to the Abode of the Supreme Deity must necessarily win, whereas the Asuras who refused would, and ought to, meet with certain death. The whole book contains but a crude description of a scramble for heaven, whose direful consequences sorely afflict all other spheres including our unfortunate little world of men. Nor is there any relieving feature about the fighting either, that being also of the same old traditional pattern. Most mysteriously, arrows are discharged in millions with such accuracy that spears and other missiles hurled by the opponents are split and shattered; or arms, heads or even entire bodies shoot forth from all unexpected places and create confounding situations along with such strangely improvised weapons as rocks and hills. Some of the enemies are overpowered by the ringing of the bell the Mother holds in Her hands<sup>1</sup>; and among

1. पातयामास चैवान्यान् धराट्स्वनविमोहितान्.

other surprising methods of warfare we find the curious one of springing into the air and beating the ground with the palms of the hand, on coming down, with such terrific force and sound<sup>2</sup> that many a demon trembles in fear or takes to flight. How can a story of this type prepare the ground for any meditation at all?

### Conflict not Inevitable

This is equivalent to the question whether anything can become an object of meditation or other spiritual practices if it does not answer one's conception of artistic beauty. If a painter condemns an object as unsymmetrical or disproportionate or showing a tasteless admixture of colours, are we to evaluate it from his standpoint only and refuse to utilise it in ways he may be entirely ignorant of? Similarly, if a grammarian or musician disapproves of a religious book written in blank verse and declares it faulty from the standpoint of diction or metre or rhythm, are we to throw it away irrespective of the noble ideas it can give us for transforming our lives? A research scholar might likewise pronounce judgment upon the Puranas that they do not present facts in the chronological order fixed by independent external evidence; or a literary critic might find the plots to be all borrowed ones and the dramatic settings inadequate.

Experts in other departments might contribute their own quota of destructive criticism; and in the end, if stock be taken, we shall perhaps find not a line of the original work surviving this specialised onslaught! Can a religious man, an entity specialising in his own way, admit the correctness of the numerous partial criticisms, and yet escape being branded as irrational if he maintains that his religious book is admirably suited for *practical* self-purification, self-regulation and self-sacrifice?

### Validity of Spiritual Standpoint

One loves one's parents, wife and children. Even when a physiologist demonstrates with X-ray photographs and other irrefutable proofs the reality of these "objects" being but simple combinations of uncouth grinning skeletons, dirty entrails and networks of tubes, do we not find it possible and *necessary* to reconcile this reality with another undoubtedly higher and blissful reality animating and transcending these combinations and demanding our love and respect? Let the artist laugh at their want of symmetry or colour or proportion; we shall only feel justly indignant at his audacity in analysing and estimating personalities from angles which ought not to be adopted by broad-minded and cultured men. If this is true of personalities, why should it not be true also in the case of personality-building books, otherwise known as the scriptures? Medicines which cure defects of the physical body do not

2. ततः काली समुत्पत्य गगनं क्षामताडयत् ।  
कगभ्यां तन्निनादेव प्राकृस्वनास्ते तिरोहिताः  
तैः शब्दैरसुरा नेयुः .....॥

become less effective if they happen to offend our fastidious sense of taste. Why should then sacred books, containing prescriptions for remedying defects of the mental outlook and infusing the supreme virtues of heroism, humility, self-sacrifice, and self-surrender, be judged from any standard other than their fitness for accomplishing the objects for which they are meant? If they are in keeping with other standards, they may be more *attractive* no doubt; but if they are not, is their special value lost in the general condemnation? "Either all values or none" seems to be an unreasonable motto in such matters.

### Poetic Beauties Too

Even descending to the literary critic's level of plot and poetic descriptions, we find that the Chandi is quite up to the mark. For it abounds in most original ideas about the Divine Mother, Her manifestations and the manner in which She disposes of the wicked and their wickedness. We are familiar with instances of ambitious schemers keeping their aggressiveness in abeyance for long periods and devoting themselves to austerities in order to secure the blessings of various deities and to fortify themselves against deserved chastisement. But we have seldom read of the situation being reversed and of insolence rising to such a height as to make the wicked offer a boon light-heartedly to the Lord Himself. Yet the Chandi does possess one such.

### No Watery Death

The first of the three main stories in the Chandi tells that two Asuras called Madhu and Kaitabha threatened to devour Brahma the Creator, and perpetuate the watery condition of the universe which was under Pralaya or periodic dissolution. The Divine Mother had then assumed the form of Yogic "Sleep" and entered Vishnu's eyes. Brahma saw that unless She was made to withdraw Her influence from Her Lord, He would not be able to rouse Himself and develop the notion of separateness enough for perceiving the danger ahead. With the force of hymns backed by intense concentration and devotional fervour, Brahma therefore secured the Mother's grace; and She instilled into Vishnu's mind the idea of combating the Asuras and putting them to death.<sup>3</sup> Waking up, and with His bare arms for weapons, the Lord fought long with them, till at last, coming under the maddening power of the Mother, the Asuras arrogantly bade their divine antagonist accept a boon from them!<sup>4</sup> Dancing to their tune, Vishnu chose the boon that both of them should be killed by Him forthwith. The deluded Asuras found the universe full of water, and deeming themselves shrewd beyond compare, addressed

3. दृष्ट्वा तावसुरौ चोग्रौ प्रसुप्तं च जनार्दनम् ।  
तृष्ट्वा योगनिद्रां तामेकाग्रहृदयःस्थितः  
विवोधनार्थाय हरेर्हरिनेत्रकृतालयाम् ॥  
निद्रां भगवतीं विष्णोरतुलां तेजसः प्रभुः ॥

4. तावद्यतिबलोन्मत्तौ महामायाविमोहिता ॥  
उक्तवन्तौ वरोऽस्मत्तो व्रियतामिति केशवम् ।

the Lotus-eyed and said, "Kill us where there is no water in the worlds." Saying "So be it" the Lord played a practical joke upon them by forcing their heads on to His solid thighs and chopping them off with His never-failing discus ! \*

### Marriage after Defeat

The third story contains something equally novel and unforgettable. We have often heard of occasions on which the occupants of heaven came down to the earth to taste the sweetness of human loves. But here we come across the rare phenomenon of Asuras falling in love with the Divine Mother and asking for Her hand in marriage. It happened in this wise. Sumbha and Nisumbha had misused divine grace for selfish aggrandisement, evicted the gods from their spheres and usurped their rights and privileges. Chanda and Munda, their ever-vigilant spies, moving in pair like their masters, noticed the Mother wearing an enchanting form and illuminating the sides of the Himalayas. Of Her matchless beauty they could give an idea to their chiefs only by attempting comparisons with the glories of the car, umbrella or jewels already snatched away from the hands of Brahma, Kubera, Varuna and other deities. Their passion aroused by the glowing description, Sumbha despatched a messenger to persuade Ambika to marry him or his royal

brother, Nisumbha, both being entitled to gems, and She being a gem of the animate group! The Mother of the universe smiled and broke forth in musical tones: "All you have said is true. But hear of a vow I made formerly out of sheer folly. 'Whoever,' vowed I, 'will conquer Me in battle and break my pride, whoever will show himself a match to me in the three worlds, he alone shall be My husband.' Let therefore either of the Asuras come here and speedily gain My hand by defeating Me."

The messenger took offence at this insult offered by a solitary woman to the dignity of his masters, before whom the entire heavenly hosts were wont to quake. But the Mother sent him back with the remark, "True, but what can I do? When I made the vow I did not think over it well."

### Slain under Saving Glance

Came then Dhumra-lochana of the dusky vision, at the head of a contingent of soldiers, commissioned to drag the Mother by Her hair if She would not proceed to the palace of the gem-owning Sumbha of Her own accord. On hearing his peremptory order to get up if She did not wish to be dragged, She assumed a humble look but flung Her calm defiance at him. "The Asura king," said She, "has sent you. You are powerful yourself; and have a mighty army with you. What can I do if you carry Me away by

5. भवेतामद्य मे तुष्टौ मम बध्नावुभावपि ।

आवां जहि न यतोर्व सलिलेन परिप्लुता ॥  
कृत्वा चक्रेण वै छिन्ने जघने शिखरी तयोः ॥

6. यो मां जयति संग्रामे यो मे दर्पं व्यपोहति ।  
यो मे प्रतिबलं लोके स मे भर्ता भविष्यति ॥

force?"" Dhumra-lochana was not prepared to waste time by talk and ran at the Mother in anger; but that happened to be the last of his acts. When the fate of the military messengers came to be known, passion and a sense of wounded pride made the Asura chiefs devise other means to achieve Ambika's capture. But when these also failed, they themselves accepted Her challenge and fought with Her till in the end they became purged of their insolence and aggressiveness through the gracious glances She let fall on them while Her deadly weapons lopped off their limbs in a few long-delayed final strokes.

### Want of Impartial Estimate

While even a superficial reading of the Chandi can reveal the existence of these and many other original ideas clothed in superbly poetic language, why is it that some critics arrive at the honest opinion that the book is dull and disgusting? It is rather strange that the picture of the exchange of blows alone should haunt the mind of any critic who lays claim to open-mindedness, while the numerous unique situations and the fervent hymns and prayers should have either failed to create any impression at all or been regarded as too insignificant to be included in the final reckoning. This lamentable failure to form an impartial estimate is often found to be the outcome of a wrong sense of values or of the

mistaken attitude with which the study is undertaken.

It is idle to think that a single casual reading of the Chandi, or of any other religious book for the matter of that, carried on in any mood that might be holding sway over the mind at the time, is bound to produce highly miraculous effects. In this respect, the mind is not far different from any ordinary machine, which can yield us only the energy that we put into it, minus the quantity lost through the inevitable friction and the like. If while kneeling down before an altar, offering a flower or uttering a prayer we tune our minds for a time into a reverent attitude, the solid, non-mysterious gain is in the higher level that we *actually reach* while that mood lasts. A further step that we can legitimately expect under the reign of Law, is that the mind may get more easily into that mood when tuning is attempted on subsequent occasions. It may also remain in it longer with a sense of pleasure and calmness; and continuous practice in the same direction may lead to far higher flights than were looked forward to in the earlier stages. But to expect that for a single, mechanical, indifferent or sceptically performed act connected with the reading of a book, one is entitled to get an absurdly disproportionate result in the shape of divine grace and illumination, is quite preposterous, and shocking to our ideas of cause and effect. Strenuous efforts are necessary, based upon the laws of mental

7. दैत्येश्वरेण प्रहितो बलवान्बलसंवृतः ।

बलात्रयसि मामेवं ततः किं ते करोम्यहम्॥

science, if an aspirant is to overcome the resistance of old habits and old passions, even when he has acquired a most intense yearning to bring them under control. What need, then, to speak of the care with which the beginner has to learn the art of tuning the mind even to the lowest pitch of reverence, and the number of times simple exercises like chanting will have to be gone through for its acquisition? Critical attitude persisted in, can at most develop only an all-criticising mood; it can never create reverence. Reverence one has to awaken by one's own well-directed creative efforts; and when that is persisted in, it can widen into an all-revering and all-embracing ocean of love, according a relative value to all criticisms made from the standpoints of art, historical research and other allied departments. Since spiritual practice aims at mastering this sublime mood, it follows that while engaged in any of the prescribed steps, one should try one's utmost to check, at least for the time, all emotions and outlooks which are opposed to one's conception of holiness or divinity. One has also to get reconciled to repetitions of simple steps till one experiences the broadening of personality certain for those who overcome the resistance and achieve the tuning which those steps demand.

### Factors of External and Internal Impurity

This principle is at the bottom of the injunctions about religious study contained in the Smritis. The stu-

dent is asked to stop his Pārāyanam when he has reason to conclude that either the external or the internal world has become impure and threatens disturbance, if not actual destruction. Thus it goes without saying that it would be worse than Nero's proverbial fiddling if Vedic study or meditation were to be continued when dacoits are plundering one's village or the houses in the neighbourhood are being licked to ashes by a raging fire.<sup>8</sup> Relatively, under the circumstances, one's scale of duty shows an altered ascending order of importance; and it would be futile and inhuman, as well as against the very broad-mindedness aimed at by religious observances, to keep one's seat and not to dedicate one's energies for local defence or for the putting down of the angry element. It is quite plain why study and religious practices should also be forbidden as soon as a heavy meal is over, or it has given birth to stomach disorders including indigestion, vomiting or foul belchings, or when the body has been weakened by wounds and severe bleeding.<sup>9</sup> These are occasions when there is internal impurity of a physical type which is sure to render unprofitable and even risky, any effort to maintain the reverential mood needed for spiritual exercises.

8. चौरैरुपलुते ग्रामे सम्भ्रमे चाग्निकारिते।

(Manu IV, 119)

9. न भुक्तमाले, नाजीर्णे, न वमिष्व, न शुक्ले रुधिरं च सते गावाच्छस्त्रेण च परिचिते ॥

(Manu IV, 121-122)



### Minimum Control of Disturbing Moods

Judging from this standpoint, we may conclude that a hypercritical, sceptical, indifferent or contemptuous mood is equally a sign of internal impurity, of a mental type, inimical to the growth of the spirit of holiness or to the cleansing of the personality, which exercises like chanting are meant to accomplish. It is enough, in the earlier stages, if the yearning for spiritual verities can prevent critical and other irrelevant outlooks from *intruding* into the nascent mood of reverence. For a man of normal mental power it can by no means be a difficult task. Even a student of the lower classes at school, for example, is able to stop his knowledge of geography from coming into clash with a mathematics lesson that he may be

attending after a time. Is it not possible for an older person, endowed with a critical faculty to criticise his own lack of self-control to such an extent as to rouse himself for expelling alien attitudes at will, and keeping up a reverent one for a time, when a chant is going on?

If this is possible and the passages can be repeated a sufficient number of times, one becomes capable of plunging below the surface meanings and grasping the subtler beauties and implications in which the Chandi and similar books abound. According to the principle of तज्जपस्तदर्थमात्मनम्, one has to repeat many a time and think seriously, in order to comprehend the vital significance of scriptural words and passages.

Further discussion on the Chandi we reserve to the next issue.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

15th Sravana 1325 B. E.

**T**ODAY I found the Mother alone and therefore had a long talk with her. But our conversation mainly drifted to the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Perhaps on account of the death of Swami Premananda, she had been continually thinking of these monks. Referring to them the Holy Mother said, "Sri Ramakrishna accepted his disciples after thoroughly examining them. What an austere life they led at the Baranagore

monastery after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna! Niranjan and others often starved themselves. They spent their time in meditation and prayer.

### Master's Reponse to Naren's Test

"One day these young monks were talking among themselves: 'We have renounced everything in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. Let us see if he would supply us with our food if we simply depend upon him. We will not tell anybody of our

wants. We will not go out for begging!' They covered their bodies with sheets of cloth and sat down for meditation. The whole day passed away. It was late at night. They heard somebody knocking at the door. Naren left the seat and asked one of his brother monks, 'Please open the door and see who is there. First of all, notice if he has anything in his hand.' What a miracle! As soon as the door was opened, it was found that a man was standing there, bringing delicious food from a temple on the bank of the Ganges. They were exceedingly happy and convinced of the protecting hand of Sri Ramakrishna. They offered that food to Sri Ramakrishna at that late hour of the night, and partook of the Prasad.

"Such things happened many a time. Now the monks do not experience any such difficulty. Alas! What hardship did Naren (Swami Vivekananda) and Baburam (Swami Premananda) pass through! Even my Rakhai (Swami Brahmananda), who is now the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, had to cleanse the pots and kettles, many a day.

### **Rama's Grace and Prasad**

"At one time Naren was travelling as an itinerant monk in Northern India. He did not get any food for two days and lay down under a tree. He found a man standing near him, with delicious food and a jar of water in his hands. The man said, 'Here is the Prasad of Rama. Please accept it.' Naren

said 'You do not know me, my good friend. You have made a mistake. Perhaps you have brought these articles for some one else.' The man said with utmost humility, 'No, revered Sir. I have brought this food for you alone. I was enjoying a little nap at noon-time when I saw a man in dream. He said, 'Get up quickly. A holy man is lying under yonder tree. Give him some food.' I dismissed the whole thing as a mere dream. Therefore I turned on my side and again fell asleep. Then I again dreamt of the man, who said to me and gave me a push, 'I am asking you to get up and still you are sleeping! Carry out my order without any delay.' Then I thought that it was not an illusory dream. It was the command of Rama. Therefore in obedience to His command I brought these articles for you, Sir.' Naren realised that it was all due to the grace of Sri Ramakrishna, and cheerfully accepted the food.

### **Grateful Recognition**

"A similar incident happened another day. Naren was travelling in the Himalayas for three days without any food. He was about to faint when a Mussalman Fakir gave him a cucumber. It saved his life that time. After his return from America, Naren was one day addressing a meeting in Almora. He saw that Mussalman seated in a corner. Naren at once went to him, took the Fakir by the hand and made him sit in the centre of the gathering. The audience was

surprised. Naren said, 'This gentleman saved my life once.' He then narrated the whole incident. He also gave the Fakir some money. But at first he refused to accept the gift. He said, 'What have I done that you are so anxious to make me a gift!' Naren did not listen to him and pressed some money into his pocket.

### Fever Sought by Love

"Naren took me to the Belur Math at the time of first Durga Puja, and through me gave twenty-five Rupees to the priest as his fee. They spent fourteen hundred Rupees on that auspicious occasion. The place became crowded with people. The monks worked hard. Naren came to me and said, 'Mother, please make me lie down with fever.' No sooner did he say this than he was laid down with a severe attack of fever. I thought, 'Goodness gracious! What is this? How will he be cured?' 'Do not be anxious, Mother,' said Naren, 'I have myself begged for this fever. My reason is this. The boys are working hard. But if I see their slightest mistake, I shall fly into a passion. I shall abuse them. I may even give them slaps. It will

be painful for them as well as for me. Therefore I thought it would be better to lie down with fever for some time.' When the day's function was over, I came to him and said, 'Dear child, the work is over now. Please get up.' Naren said that he was all right and got up from bed!

### A Gentle Correction

"He also brought his own mother to the Math at the time of the Durga Puja. She roamed from one garden to another and picked chillies, egg-plants, etc. She became a little proud thinking that it was all due to her son, Naren. Naren came to her and said, 'What are you doing there? Why do you not go and meet the Holy Mother? You are simply picking up these vegetables. May be you are thinking that your son has done all this work. No, mother. You are mistaken. It is He who has done all this. Naren is nothing.' Naren meant that the Math was founded through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna. What a great devotion!

"My Baburam is dead! Alas! Who will look after the Durga Puja this year?"

## THE IMPORT OF DEATH

By Sridhar Majumdar, M.A.

(To overcome Death, we are told, is to be above mutation ; that is, to be assimilated into something immutable. This immutable something is the All-pervading Spirit, on experiencing which, the phenomenon undergoes mutation and disappears so far as that particular experiencer is concerned Ed.)

**U**PANISHADS, which are the outcome of direct intuition of the Seers of old, called Rishis, declare unequivocally that every thing is nothing else but manifestation of Brahman.

"Every thing indeed is Brahman, emanating from Him, living and moving in Him and ultimately disappearing in Him ; so He is to be worshipped in a calm spirit" (Sandilya-Vidya, Chandogyopanishad, III, 14, 1.)<sup>1</sup>

### Changeable and Unchangeable

By "every thing," in the passage above referred to, is meant every thing within and outside. "Every thing outside" indicates every thing perceptible by the external senses, such as sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. "Every thing within" indicates something behind the phenomenal world, which keeps alive every thing outside. So "every thing" can be divided into two categories,—one is the changeable external appearance perceived by the senses ; and the other is the unchangeable animation behind the external appearance. One is the mutable phenomenon ; and the other is the immutable Noumenon behind

the phenomenon. In other words, one is matter ; and the other is the All-pervading Spirit behind matter. Both matter and spirit are indestructible, being manifestations of Brahman, the only Reality (Chandogyopanishad, VI, 2, 1). Physical science also admits the indestructibility of matter ; but matter, though indestructible, is mutable, while spirit is immutable.

Sruti says : "Two forms of Brahman there are indeed, the material and the immaterial. What is material is unreal ; what is immaterial is real, and that is Brahman and that is light." (Maitryupanishad, VI, 3.)<sup>2</sup>

"What is material is transient, what is immaterial is eternal." (Tripad Vibhuti Maha Narayanopanishad, 2.)<sup>3</sup>

"Two forms of Brahman there are indeed, the material and the immaterial, the mortal and the immortal, the stationary and the movable, as well as the direct and the indirect." (Brihadaranyakopanishad, II, 3, 1.)<sup>4</sup>

२. द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्ते चामूर्ते ; चायं यन्मूर्ते तदसत्यं यदमूर्ते तत् सत्यं, तद् ब्रह्म, तत् ज्योतिः ।

३. साकारमनित्यं नित्यं निराकारम् ।

४. द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे, मूर्ते चैवामूर्ते च, सत्यं चामूर्ते च, स्थितं च यच्च, सच्च त्यच्च ।

1. सर्वे खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानीति शान्त उपासीत ।

"All these phenomena are mutable, the inner Spirit is said to be immutable; the absolute immaculate supreme Brahman is immutable." (Yogasikhopaniṣad, III 16)<sup>5</sup>

### Nature and Extent of the Mutable

So, of those two classes of things, phenomenon and Noumenon, one class, namely Noumenon, is said, in the Upanishads, to be real and permanent; and the other class, namely phenomenon, is declared therein as unreal and transient. By "unreal and transient" the Upanishads mean "mutable." Perception of the phenomenal world under the influence of nescience, and disappearance of the phenomenal world with the removal of nescience, are also due to mutation of the phenomenon to the Noumenon.

### From Noumenon through Will

Here we should have a little discussion regarding the idea, in the Upanishads, of the origin and existence of these two classes, Noumenon and phenomenon. Noumenon is said to have been in existence ever and everywhere, without limit of time, space and causation; and phenomenon is said to have sprung out of the Noumenon at the Will of the Noumenon.

Sruti says: "Oh, my son, at first before creation there was only one undifferentiated Reality without a second. That Reality willed 'I will be many, I shall manifest Myself;' so He brought forth Tejas

(Primordial heat). That Tejas willed 'I will be many, I shall manifest Myself; so He brought forth water'". (Discourse between Aruni and his son, Svetaketu; Chandogyopaniṣad, VI. 2, 1 and 3)<sup>6</sup>

### The Schools of Nescience and of Transformation

Thus it appears that phenomenon has come out of Noumenon, the Reality. In this idea of the origin of the phenomenon from the Noumenon is involved the deeper and controversial idea of the theory of Nescience (Vivarta Vada or Maya Vada) of illustrious Sankara and the theory of Transformation (Parinama Vada) of the devotional Vaishnava commentators of "The Brahma Sutras"

The former school of thought holds that this phenomenal world, though there is no denial of its practical existence, vanishes with the removal of nescience and with the consequent dawn of real knowledge; just as a mirage in the desert, or a mistaken notion of a serpent in a rope owing to distorted vision, is removed with the appearance of actual knowledge regarding them. This practical existence of the phenomenon and its disappearance are attributed to Maya—a name given to the "creative Energy of Brahman, capable of making possible an impossible thing," अघटनघटनपटीयसी ईश्वर-सृष्टि-शक्तिः। According to Devi Puranam, "They

5. चरः सर्वाणि भूतानि सूत्रात्माऽचर उच्यते ।  
अचरं परमं ब्रह्म निर्विशेषं निरञ्जनम् ॥

6. सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।  
तदैक्षत बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति तत्तेजोऽसृजत ।  
तत्तेज ऐक्षत बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति तदपोऽसृजत ॥

call it *Maya* having inscrutable cause and effect, yielding an unimaginable efficacy and appearing like a dream and an illusion in the world." 7

The other school of thought (Parinama Vada) holds that this phenomenal world has no separate existence from the Reality (Brahman) and that it is only a transformation of Brahman and that Brahman has transformed Himself into this phenomenon without impairing His own status of Noumenon, just as a spider spins a cobweb out of himself. They attribute it to the inscrutable creative Power (they do not however use the name, *Maya*) of Brahman.

### Differences Adjustable

The differences between the two schools of thought are more in words than in reality. *If the vanishing of the phenomenon be treated as transformation of the phenomenon into the Noumenon, the views of the two schools of thought are adjusted.*

### Ramakrishna's Experience of Merging of Phenomenon

An illustration of the theory of Nescience (Vivarta Vada) is best traced from the life of Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, when he was about to do away with his own life with the sword in the sanctuary of Goddess Kali at Dakshineswar, being hopeless for the Divine Vision; as he himself expressed his own idea of vision (depicted in the

English translation of his life by Romain Rolland, the well-known French writer)—“And lo! the whole scene, doors, windows, the temple itself vanished.....It seemed as if nothing existed any more. Instead, I saw an ocean of the Spirit, boundless, dazzling. In whatever direction I turned, great luminous waves were rising. They bore down upon me with a loud roar, as if to swallow me up. In an instant they were upon me. They broke over me, they engulfed me. I was suffocated. I lost consciousness and I fell. How I passed that day and the next I know not. Round me rolled an ocean of ineffable joy. And in the depths of my being I was conscious of the presence of the Divine Mother.” (English translation of “The Life of Ramakrishna” by Romain Rolland, P. 38.)

### Upanishadic Support

While in his vision in superconscious ecstasy (Samadhi), Ramakrishna was in the Noumenon, when the phenomenal world disappeared. By Noumenon is meant “चिदाकाश” (the All-pervading Intellect) or “परमाकाश” (the Supreme Space). This vision of Ramakrishna in superconscious ecstasy is supported by the Upanishads also :— “अनिर्वचनीयज्योतिः सर्वव्यापकं निरतिशयानन्दलक्षणं परमाकाशम्”—“The Supreme space is effulgence, inexpressible, all-pervading and indicative of extreme bliss” (Mandala Brahmanopanishad, 19). His respiration stopped and he became ‘unconscious.’ It is also

7. विचित्र-कार्यकारः । अचिन्तितफलप्रदा ।

स्वप्नेन्द्रजालवल्लोके माया तेन प्रक्रीतिता ॥

supported by the Upanishads that when an individual soul merges in Samadhi, in the all-pervading Supreme Soul, Brahman, the functions of the mind remain suspended, and respiration comes to a standstill, and an ineffable joy is perceived within.

Sruti says: "Well, O knower of Brahman, when the union of an individual soul is effected with the Supreme Soul, functions of the mind come to suspension; and with the causation of dissolution of the mind respiration comes to a standstill; and from dissolution of the mind arise happiness and the supreme state of bliss inherent in the Self." (Yoga Sikhohanishad, I, 135 and 136.)<sup>8</sup>

Without refuting the practical existence of the universe, the supporters of the theory of Nescience hold that the visible universe is only a phenomenal evolution. Just as a dream appears to be perfectly true in a dreaming state, but it becomes unreal in our waking state; so this universe, though appearing very real in our waking state, becomes non-existent with the dawn of real knowledge. The Upanishads call the state of Samadhi the real state of knowledge:

"By the word, Samadhi, is said only the *knowledge* of Reality, which

burns the straw of desire." (Mahopanishad, IV, 12).<sup>9</sup>

"Well, O knower of Brahman, by the word Samadhi, sages mean the supreme *knowledge*, well concentrated, perpetually satiated and indicative of the real meaning of the universe." (Annapurnopanishad, I, 48)<sup>10</sup>

The Upanishads also say that the vision of the phenomenal world ceases when one remains in the Noumenon; just as our common experience shows, Noumenon remains behind the background when the phenomenon becomes visible:

"When one sees the only Supreme Soul spiritually, the vision of the whole phenomenal universe ceases." (Jabala-Darsanopanishad, X, 12)<sup>11</sup>

So the vision perceived by Ramakrishna has the full support of the Upanishads. It is a state of existence in the Noumenon; but it is a change of existence from the phenomenal world to the Noumenon.

### Way of Overcoming Death

The passing phases of the phenomenal world indicate changes of existence. Death also means a mere mutation of phenomenal bodies. To overcome Death is to be above mutation; that is, to be assimilated to something immutable. This immutable Something has been discovered

8. श्लेष्मन्तः परमात्मा च तयैरैक्यं यदा भवेत् ।  
तदैक्ये साधिते ब्रह्मन् चित्तं याति विलीन-  
ताम् ॥ पवनस्यैर्यमायाति लययोगोदये  
सति । लयात् संप्राप्यते सौख्यं स्वात्मानन्दं  
परं पदम् ॥

9. सत्वावबोध एवासौ वासना-तृण-पावकः ।  
प्रोक्तः समाधिश्चन्द्रेण न तु तृष्णीमवस्थितिः ॥  
10. समाहिता नित्यतृप्ता यथाभूतायैदृशिनी ।  
ब्रह्मन् समाधिश्चन्द्रेण पराप्रज्ञोच्यते बुधैः ॥  
11. यदा पश्यति चात्मानं केवलं परमार्थतः ।  
मायामालं जगत्कृत्स्नं तदा भवति निर्वृतिः ॥

by the Upanishadic Seers, from their life-long intuitive researches, to be the all-pervading Spirit, the immutable Noumenon, the unfailing substratum behind the phenomenal world.

'They, i.e., the Seers, by dint of meditation, saw, as the cause, Brahman's own Energy concealed in His

own nature. He alone regulates all the causes including time and ego." (Svetaswataropaniṣad, I, 3)<sup>12</sup>

12 ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन्  
देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढां ।  
यः कारणाणि निश्चिन्तानि तानि  
कालात्मयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥

## DISCIPLINARY PRELUDE TO THE STUDY OF VEDANTA

*By Sheonarayan Lal Shrivastava, M.A.*

**V**EDANTA is a unique system of thought, unique in the boldness of its conclusions, in the subtlety of its dialectic, and in its freedom from all shades of dogmatism. Its approach is philosophic *per sang*, keeping at a safe distance all the deep-rooted theological prepossessions of man. No wonder then, that Max Muller should have said of it that it is "a system in which human speculation seems to have reached its very acme." Its appeal to the children of the soil is palpable from their according it the first place amongst their systems of philosophies.

### **Discipline for Even Intellectual Comprehension**

Vedanta however, is not a system of philosophy which is so easily comprehensible. It requires the persistent efforts of a sharp intellect to grasp its fundamentals. The Vedantins maintain that the under-

standing of the deep truths of Vedanta is facilitated by the student's disciplinary equipment, which is an indispensable prerequisite to Vedantic studies. Not only is moral discipline a practical means to the intuitionist realisation of Brahman, but it is even helpful in the intellectual comprehension of Vedantic truths. It is a trite saying of the Vedantins that *Sadhana-chatushtaya* or the Fourfold Discipline must precede *Brahma-jijnasa* or the enquiry after Brahman. The Hindu thinkers believe in the increased intellectual efficiency of a morally disciplined mind. What physical hygiene is to the health of the body, ethical hygiene is to the health of the mind.

All students of the Upanishads must be familiar with the fact that the ancient Upanishadic teachers used to prescribe longer or shorter periods of *Tapas* to seekers of



Brahma-jnana, according as they were lower or higher in the scale of ethical evolution. The aspirant was taken by and by from lower to higher and higher truths; and his intellectual advance was always found to run parallel and proportional to his ethical advance, to the cumulative effect of his ever-growing Tapas. To most modern minds all this is likely to appear a meaningless joke. What on earth, they may ask, has intellectual clarity to do with Tapas? An answer to this question is here attempted in the lines that follow.

### **Need for Reflective Turn of Mind**

It is well known that every branch of knowledge requires of its student, for the adequate comprehension of its advanced principles, a disposition of mind suited to it. We would not expect a man without a scientific disposition of mind, without scientific insight, to understand higher scientific truths, though he may be a great poet or a great artist. Every study to be thorough, requires an insight in that particular direction. Philosophy is no exception to this general rule. It also invites to its sanctuary men with a steady and reflective vein of mind.

But, granting that for any particular study there must be a disposition of mind suited to it together with an aptitude for it, it may yet be that moral equipment has nothing whatsoever to do with it. This, we concede, is a truism in so far as other branches of study

are concerned; but the case of Vedanta is different. A man may be a physicist or a chemist or a historian or even a philosopher without any moral stamina in him; but he cannot be a Vedantin. The possibility of adequately comprehending the fundamentals of Vedanta shall ever remain closed to him. Vedanta insists on disciplinary equipment, not only as a means to realisation or the intuitional experience of Truth, but even for the intellectual comprehension of its cardinal tenets.

### **Capacity for Subtle Introspection**

Every serious student of Vedanta knows full well that its cardinal principles are arrived at by deep and subtle introspective analysis of experience and are not likely to be grasped by those who have no facility in such methods. The Vedanta philosophers were fortunate in realising that theorising on the surface facts of experience was but a very ineffectual way of coming to ultimate truths. They chose, by introspection, to penetrate to the deeper and basic facts of existence—the true data for metaphysical construction. Introspection helped them to penetrate to those deeper recesses of existence which are hidden to our naive sense experience.

Intellectual construction always proceeded in closest collaboration with the introspective observation of basic facts. The psychological ever went hand in hand with the logical; hence the giddy heights reached by Vedanta. For instance

it is the introspective genius of our Vedantic thinkers which discerned that the entire range of experience could be classified into four primary and basic states—Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dream), Sushupti (deep sleep) and Turiya (transcendent)—a classification which is of such immense value in the system of Vedanta.

### Calmness and Inwardness

Now, the aptitude for subtle introspective observation can only belong to a mind which is calm, collected, and composed, more inward than outward. To bring about steadiness and tranquillity of mind, such as is well fitted for introspection, a Fourfold Sadhana is insisted upon.

### Fourfold Discipline and Personality

The cardinal disciplinary principles of Vedanta, as put forth by Sri Sankaracharya, are (i) शमदमसंशयः (ii) नित्यानित्यवस्तुनिर्वेकः (iii) इहामुक्तफलभोगविमर्गः and (iv) मुमुक्षुत्वम्. We shall confine ourselves here to throwing some light on their significance as aids to the intellectual comprehension of Vedanta. The intellectual predilections of any one depend very much on the type of person that he is. Fichte has rightly observed that "what kind of philosophy a man chooses, depends ultimately upon what kind of man he is." The system of Vedantic culture therefore aims at inculcating those principles in a man which deepen his philosophic insight and make the Vedantic truths

easily acceptable to him. The true Vedantin, as the Hindu thinkers have always visualised him, is not merely a theorist with a certain set of notions about the ultimate Reality, but also a *type of personality*.

Considering the Sadhanas, we find that they all aim at engendering in man the right attitude of philosophic search. To begin with, the Shama - Damadi - Sadhana - Sampat includes six disciplinary principles, *viz.*, Shama, Dama, Uparati, Titikshā, Samādhāna and Shraddhā. Now, what is Shama? \* Govindānanda defines it: "लौकिकव्यापारात् शमः उपरतिः शमः"। It is taking a dispassionate or detached view of the affairs of life. We do not often notice how imperceptibly and silently our affections for the objects of life create in the mind an unduly strong bias for them and disable it from discerning higher values and higher realities. To see things from a proper perspective, it is necessary to take a dispassionate stand.

What is Dama? "वाद्यक्रगानामुपरमो दमः"। It is gloating over sense enjoyment that curbs and cripples the vigour of thought. Hence the necessity of restraining from sensuality for one who would choose to be a thinker.

Then comes Uparati which is defined as "ज्ञानार्थं विहितनित्यादिकर्म-संन्यासः"। Its purpose is to emancipate the mind from an inflexible routine of duties which have not for their end the supremest goal

\* This and the following definitions are taken from the Ratna-Trābhā of Govindānanda.

of life—the realisation of the highest Truth. When thus emancipated it can go on a free and unchequered pursuit of Truth.

In addition to these, has been included Titikshā or an ungrudging endurance of the dual correlatives of pleasure and pain, heat and cold, etc. Samādhānā means keeping the mind steady, not allowing it to lapse into sleepiness, laziness and inattention. Shraddhā is a respectful trust for all higher things.

A second cardinal principle of discipline is नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक or the constant habit of discrimination between the Eternal and the transient. Truth is, *ex hypothesi*, eternally immutable and abiding. All that passes away, is negated or sublated in *any state of experience*, cannot claim to be real from an ultimate or metaphysical standpoint. This habit of discrimination cannot too strongly be emphasised for a seeker of Truth. The soul of man is stirred from its very depths to seek the Eternal, only when it has perceived the extreme evanescence of all earthly objects.

A third principle of discipline is इहमुत्रफलभोगविराग or relinquishing the

desire for the enjoyment of the fruits of actions here or hereafter. To the genuine seeker nothing is higher and more desirable than the attainment of the highest Truth. Enjoyment, earthly or heavenly, is but a trifle as compared to it. His one supreme desire is Illumination.

Lastly, we have what is known as Mumukshutva or the desire of emancipation from the all-enveloping Nescience, a consuming passion for the living presence of Truth where every trace of ignorance has disappeared.

It is this Fourfold Discipline which is verily the Prelude to the study of Vedanta. With a proper training in these qualities, obstacles to the perception of Truth, like restlessness, hankering after pleasures and the consequent raging of the passions of love and hatred, are rooted out from the mind, which acquires in addition the positive virtues of steadiness and subtlety in the very process of purification. One's penetration into, or assimilation of, the Vedanta Truths is thus directly proportionate to one's mastery of these items of discipline.

# SHANKARA; A DAY DREAM

(FACTS AND FICTION)

By Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz

**T**HE circumpolar zone, spinning round the North Pole (Meru) is splendidly illumined during Devayana by the aurora borealis (ushas), but sparsely lit in Dakshinayana by its solitary celestial guide, the Great Bear thus named after the white polar bears with whom prehistoric man had to grapple. In the last Ice Age the Aryan nest became glaciated, and Pathikrits or pathfinders led the Arctic sires in huge canoes or arks across the vast ice-floes. After many venturous wanderings the Hindu voyagers reached Garhwal on the slopes of the Himalayas near the source of Mother Ganges. Here Badaris or jujube trees grew in abundance, but there were no more polar bears. So Saptarksha (the Great Bear) was renamed Saptarshi, and a legend *ad hoc* invented.

The earliest Hindu settlements were quadrangular, had the shape of a Swastika, and were divided into four quarters. The northern gate of the Swastikagrama was the portal of the midnight sun, known as the Path of Heroes (Narayana). It was here that the Sthapati or master-builder laid out a sun-shrine, dedicated to the "sacred light (Deva) on the ancestral route to the jujube trees";

the Badari was sacred to Vishnu, Badari-Narayana. The Vishnu cult spread to Badara on the Baluchi coast, and thence to Trichur, half-way between Calicut and Cochin; all three on the Malabar littoral. Badarayana was an Advaita-school in Badara.

## Ancestry

Agrahara (taking the foremost or best) signifies a royal grant of land donated to the clergy. The crest or crown (Rajashekharā) donated an Agrahara to the Brahmins of Kaladi, a village north of Cochin. Vidyadhiraja (more than King of Vedic lore) was a learned priest officiating at the Shiva temple in Kaladi. His only son, Shivaguru, also taught Shaiva mysteries, and was a leading astronomer in the land of Kerala, famed for daring research in the science of the stars. Shivaguru married into the Nambudiri family of Trichur Brahmins. A.D. 788, shortly after his death a posthumous son was born in Kaladi.

## Renunciation

The child's name was Shankara. He grew up strong and athletic. One day, the boy plunged into the swollen river. A crocodile pulled at his foot. In the face of death, the youth vowed supreme renunciation or 'relinquishment in misfor-

tune' as he expressed it ; Apad-Sannyasa. He emerged from the waves a declared Sannyasi, left all private property to his relatives, and went in search of a Guru to the Narmada shores. Thence he proceeded to the Himalayan hermitage of Bhagavatpada (step of Vishnu) who had just succeeded Gaudapada as monastic head. By this time Mahayana-Buddhism had spread from Magadha to the Himalayas and Kashmir. Buddha and Vishnu bear the title Chakravarti (turner of the wheel), an old Arctic designation of the sacred light which speeds round the horizon from the winter solstice to midsummer night and back again to the womb of time, ready for a new nativity,—year by year, *per saecula saeculorum*.

Shankara was initiated into the "vision splendid" of the One abiding Reality, efficient through myriads of fugitive appearances in this Vanity Fair, known as the world. In commemoration of his investiture with the yellow robe, his maternal kinsmen of Trichur founded near the sun-shrine (its name was Badari) a sun-hermitage (Badarika-ashrama) where a Nam-budiri priest officiated ever since. Vaishnava pilgrims still do homage at Badarikashram to the Lord of the midnight sun, who had led the Aryan forebears from polar icebergs and icebears to wintry Himalayas where Saptarksha was etymologically no longer understood and metamorphosed into "seven sages."

Namaste! Vishnu-Badari-Narayana!

### Follow the Divine Shepherd

Shankara, now an itinerant preacher and wandering wizard, came to Benares where he wrote a terse comment on the thousand names of Vishnu (Vishnu-Sahasranama). Paying a visit to his bed-ridden mother, he composed two rhapsodies in honor of Shiva and Vishnu; under Vishnu's spell she passed away in peace. In Benares Shankara noticed a student eagerly conning the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar. The Acharya took pity and warned: "Such technical research can never save the soul!" And the master broke out in song: "You foolish fellow, worship the Divine Shepherd! When your appointed hour comes, and death confronts you, no repetition of Panini's rules will release you from the bonds of ingrained cosmic illusion, but Govinda will!"

Kanna-kanchana, renounced in this life is the portal to Sannyasa in the next. Sannyasis are born and not made. In a mood of impatience with married men who turn Sannyasis, Shankara annotated the Gita.

### High-brow and Low-brow

One day he went with Padmapada from Tanjore and other disciples to have the usual midday dip in the Ganges. In the narrow main street of Benares, a Chandala with a lousy dog passed them. Padmapada who was of a vain and jealous disposition, but had unbounded faith in his Shanka-shattering, doubt-destroying Guru, shouted: "Clear the road quick!" as Brahmins do

to this day in Malabar. The untouchable, ignoring the disciple, turned to the master and said: "You teach Advaita and are a Prabhakara or bearer of light, yet your followers distinguish between high-brow and low-brow, noble-bred and mean-born, and order me to get out of your way! Is your Jnana logical and consistent?" And the strange being (was he a messenger of Shiva) vanished. Shankara, struck by the pertinent retort, was entranced in Samadhi. Coming back from Nirvikalpa to normalcy the master chanted the fivefold panegyric (Panchaka - Manisha). Each of the five inspired Shlokas ends: "He who has learned to look on appearances in the Advaita spirit, is my Guru, be he Dwija or Chandala! Such is my inmost conviction!"

### Teaching and Preaching

Several years Shankara spent in Benares with brief intervals when he chose religious seclusion in Badara. His great life work, the immortal commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, deserves a place of honor by the side of Kant's Critiques or the Sum of Theology by Thomas Aquinas. Heated controversies arose on the Sutras. Shankara was a skilled strategist, ambitious to draw even philosophical adversaries into his magic net (Brahma-jala). Sometimes he would give up an earlier position which seemed too advanced, and meet a rationalistic opponent halfway. Withdrawal for a time is not surrender, but a tactical measure. Advaita, uncompromising and mili-

tant, temporarily retreated to a safer vantage-ground to prepare future more crushing attacks on the utilitarian and opportunist philosophies with which India then was teeming. *Reculer pour mieux sauter!* was Shankara's war-cry. He was now more than 25 years old, and made ready to leave Benares with a large number of followers. The Raja urged him to stay, but the Acharya excused himself: "My Guru meant me to be a peripatetic teacher; my mission is to travel and teach all over India". Ratan Singh then dismissed Shankara with rich gifts.

The prince of Sannyasis first proceeded to Prayaga, and from there to Magadha where he disputed with a redoubted knight of Karma-marga. This man of affluence mocked at Shankara's shaven crown. "From where are you, shaven (monk)?" Shankara had a strong sense of humour and hit back: "From the neck upward!" The Purva-mimamsist, defeated in the tourney of tongues, embraced Sannyasa. But Shankara plunged in Yoga and recognised "Vishnu among men", Nrisimha! True Vedanta is not egocentric, but socialistic; it demands fellow-service and sacrificial love from every devotee and initiate. The new Sannyasi was on bad terms with Padmapada; both followed the master south.

Shankara preached in Mahratta land and in the Tungabhadra valley. Then he toured the east coast, founded a Math in Orissa, and successfully combated Shakta abominations in the Madras State. Kali worship

was cleansed, immoralities were checked, and whole communities felt drawn to Jnana. On his return to north, Shankara passed Berar and stopped at Ujjain where the Bhairavas were all-powerful. In their tortured imagination the majestic God is no longer auspicious (Shiva), but terrific. They almost mobbed Shankara, but as usual he triumphed in the end. The master founded Dwarka Math in Gujarat, lectured in the

Gangetic plain, and won Buddhistic Kashmir over to Advaitism. After reforming the Shakti-cult in Assam, he retired to Badarikashrama. Here Shankara organised another Math, and raised a temple to Narayana (the Arctic God in the yearning; "*deus in rota*") on the site of an ancient sun-shrine and observatory. A. D. 828 the master died, forty years old in a hill resort in the Himalayas.

## VERBAL TESTIMONY IN PURVA MIMAMSA

*By Pt. R. S. Venkatarama Sastri, M.A.*

**V**ERBAL testimony or *śabda-pramāṇya* has always played a very prominent part in the scheme of Hindu Epistemology. According to a very imaginative writer of repute, he who takes his stand solely on Reason is like a blind man depending entirely on the tactual capacity of his hands to avoid pitfalls. All the *astika* or orthodox schools of thought have accepted the validity of the Vedas; this has become a permanent 'theological fiction' among the ritual-ridden Hindus. A modern mind would be inclined to ridicule and scout this idea of Vedic validity. But its importance could be realised when one realises that even the 'heterodox' schools of thought like Jainism and Buddhism recognised their mistake of cutting themselves away from the greatest links in the form of the Vedas,

—which fact hastened their extirpation from the land of their birth,—and that they linked their doctrines with their own ultimate authorities, later on improvised. Therefore, no religion, however nationalistic, can get on with any degree of permanency unless and until it links itself up with some ultimate authority. Otherwise it would be an ever-swinging pendulum moving to and fro, ever going, never coming to rest. Consistently with this canon, in India Hinduism has accepted the self-validity and the absolute infallibility of the Vedas.

### Dropping of Theistic Element

The exact position taken by Jaimini and his followers as regards the Vedic validity is interesting. The founder of Purva Mimāṃsa has devoted one full chapter for the discussion of this principle. He maintains unflinchingly the absolute independence and

हस्तस्पर्शादिवान्धेन विषमेऽप्यभिधावता .  
अनुमानप्रमाणेन विनिपातो न दुर्लभः ॥

integrity of Sruti. In explaining the doctrine he hints at the purpose<sup>1</sup>. The Vedic law is unalterable. It is entirely independent of any will or thought of any individual, earthly or divine. It is not susceptible of any amendment or alteration as the '*paurusheya*' laws are. If God is to be accepted at all, He must be omnipotent and omniscient. Then there would be the possibility of the Vedic law being interfered with. Therefore He was completely dropped from the considerations of the ancient Mimāṃsakas. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa opines that there is no reasonable authority warranting the existence of God! The cosmic course is based on the force of Vedic Law.<sup>2</sup> There is no creation and no creator! Still, the universe has never been unlike this!<sup>3</sup>. Such is the stark realism and the boldest pragmatism of the Mimāṃsakas.

Why should they take such a peculiar position and tear themselves away from the other orthodox schools of thought? The reason, methinks, is this. Jaimini and his followers had to meet very formidable opponents in the Buddhists, who set at nought *in toto* the Vedic integrity and carried fire and sword into their enemies' camp of ritual-ridden ceremonialism. They set up Buddha as the *Sarvajna*. If God were to be accepted by the Mimāṃsakas, why not He be the Buddha?

Thus the age-long structure of Vedic Society and religion was in a state of jeopardy. To do away with them root and branch, the Mimāṃsakas completely eschewed the theistic element from their system. To realise this motto—*Down with Buddhism*—the Jaiminias became '*nirīśvaras*' or atheists. To destroy and keep off the bugs in the form of the Buddhists, the Mimāṃsakas set fire to their own stronghold! Any way, Buddhism was given a decided blow, and the integrity of Vedic Society and religion was established once again on a sound basis. End justified the means!

### Accepted again when Danger Was Over

When Buddhism, the standing menace to the Hindu Society, was rooted out of India, the other Schools of philosophic thought began to look down upon the followers of Jaimini with derision and contempt and stigmatized them as unbelievers in God. The Naiyāyikas accepted an omnipotent and omniscient God as the author of the Vedas and thus maintained the integrity of the Sruti. Says Udayanācharya in his inimitable way: "Injunction, like pregnancy, speaks for the association of the Sruti-nymph with a masculine individual." Likewise other *astikas* too, accepted the Vedic infallibility with some slight modifications.

Later on, savants of Mimāṃsa could not view the stigma cast up

2. 'निरपेक्षत्वेन प्रामाण्यसिद्धयर्थे—'

3. 'सैषा श्रुतिसमवाप्तिर्देवता'

4. 'न कदाचिदनीदृशं जगत्'.

5. विधिः गर्भे इव श्रुतिकुमार्याः पुंयोगं गमयति ।



on their predecessors by the other Schools of thought, and the complete extinction of the theistic element in their system, with equanimity, with the result that they introduced the idea of God and effected a sort of reconciliation between the *apaurusheyatva* of the Vedas and the theistic doctrine. These are generally known as *śeṣvara* or theistic Mimāṃsakas, prominent of whom are Vedānta Desika, Appaiya Dikṣita and Vasudeva Dikṣita.

### Manner of Reconciliation

This is how the reconciliation has been effected. Let there be creation and creator. Consistently with the dictum, at once realistic and pragmatic, that the 'Universe has never been unlike as at present', let the cosmic course be construed as '*anādi*' or beginningless. When the first Kalpa and its creation happened, one cannot say. *Iśvara*, the omnipotent and omniscient, is the creator. When He set the cycle of Samsara in motion, one cannot say. Even according to the Naiyāyikas, the eternal entities like the atoms are in the same boat. God is merely the *custodian* of the eternal entities. In this sense He is the creator. Thus consistently with the acceptance of the theistic doctrine of the orthodox Schools, the followers of Jaimini have maintained the absolute infallibility and independence of the Vedas.

Thus the theistic doctrine and the independent validity of the Sruti are not incompatible with each other. A Mimāṃsaka, therefore, need not be atheistic in faith and outlook and need not be looked down upon with contempt and stigma. This is, methinks, the point sought to be proved by Āpadeva, the author of the *Mimamsa Nyaya Prakasa*, when he writes: "The Veda is not written by any individual. By—"The whole study of the Veda is preceded by the preceptor's study, for it has the genus of the Vedic study like the present study"—and the like, the independence of the Veda has already been proved. By the principle 'the Kalpa is preceded by a Kalpa,' inasmuch as the Samsāra is beginningless and Iśvara is omniscient, when it could easily be maintained that God utters the Veda after bringing it to memory, the view that He produces it after having got at the ideas through other means of knowledge, is not proper."

6. "न हि वेदः पुरुषनिर्मितः । 'वेदस्याध्ययनं सर्वं गुर्वध्ययनपूर्वकं । वेदाध्ययनसामान्यात् अधुनाध्ययनं यथा' ॥ इत्यादिना वेदापौरुषेयत्वस्य साधितत्वात् । 'यः कल्पः स कल्पपूर्वः' इतिन्यायेन, संसारस्य अनादित्वात् ईश्वरस्य च सर्वज्ञत्वात्, ईश्वरः गतगल्पीयं वेदं अस्मिन् कल्पे स्मृत्वा उपदिशतीत्येतावन्तव उपपत्तौ, प्रमाणान्तरेण अर्थमुपलभ्य रचितत्वकल्पनानुपपत्तश्च ॥"

# SONG OF THE SANNYASIN\*

[सन्यासि-गीतिका\*]

By Swami Vivekananda

(Continued from July issue)

(7)

Where seekest thou? That free-  
dom, friend, this world  
Nor that can give. In books and  
temples  
Vain thy search. Thine only is the  
hand that holds  
The rope that drags thee on. Then  
cease lament,  
Let go thy hold, Sannyasin bold!  
say

“Om Tat Sat Om”!

(8)

Say “Peace to all! From me no  
danger be  
To aught that lives. In those that  
dwell on high,  
In those that lowly creep, I am  
the self of all.  
All life, both here and there, do I  
renounce,  
All heavens, earths and hells, all  
hopes and fears.”  
Thus cut thy bonds, Sannyasin  
bold! say

“Om Tat Sat Om”!

कुत्रान्विष्यसि मुक्तितां? प्रियसखे! नायं हि  
लोकस्तु ते  
लोकोऽन्योऽपि न दत्स्यते कथमपि, ग्रन्थेषु वै  
मन्दिरे ।  
व्यग्रश्चास्ति परिश्रमोऽत्रभवता स्वाभ्यन्तरे-  
ऽन्विष्यताम्  
सन्यासिन्! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।  
येन त्वं परिपीडितोऽसि नितरां, हस्ते त्वदीये  
हि तत्  
हस्तेनैव हि धार्यते च सकलं त्वत्पाशजालं महत् ।  
तस्मान्कोकविलापनं त्यज सखे! —पाशश्च भो!  
मुच्यताम्  
सन्यासिन्! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।  
सर्वेभ्योऽस्तु शिवं तथा न च भवेन्मत्तो भयं  
प्राणिनां,  
स्वर्गे यस्तु विराजते, चित्तितले नीचैश्च सर्पन्ति  
ये ।  
सर्वेषामहमस्मि जीवनधरात्मेति,—त्वया कथ्यताम्  
सन्यासिन्! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।  
आमुष्मिक्यमधैहिकं च सकलं भोगं त्यजामि  
स्वकम्  
स्वर्गं, भौममयो तथा च नरकं, सर्वं प्रतीक्षा-  
भयम् ।  
सन्यस्तं हि मयेति भो! कथय, च त्वद्वन्धनं  
कर्त्यताम्  
सन्यासिन्! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।

\* Translated in Sardulavikridita metre by Srimat Swami Nityananda Bharati Shastri, Vedacharya of Uttarakasi.

(9)

Heed then no more how body lives  
or goes,

Its task is done. Let Karma float it  
down ;

Let one put garlands on, another  
kick

This frame : say naught. No praise  
or blame can be

Where praiser, praised and blamer,  
blamed are one.

Thus be thou calm, Sannyasin bold !  
say

“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

तस्मान्नैव विचिन्त्यतां निजवपुस्तिष्ठत्वथो यातु वा  
कार्ये तेन सुसाधितं, त्वमधुना देवार्पणं तत् कृयाः ।  
पुष्पैरर्चतु, पादमाक्षिपतु वा किञ्चिन्न वै कश्य-  
ताम्

सन्न्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

पूजा तत्र विग्रहेण कथमपि स्यात् न धे शक्नुतः  
स्तुत्यस्तावकनिन्द्यनिन्दकगणाः यत्कथयन्तां  
गताः ।

इत्य शान्तमना भवान् भवतु च द्रुत न व दृश्य-  
ताम्

सन्न्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

(10)

Truth never comes where lust and  
fame and greed

Of gain reside. No man who thinks  
of woman

As his wife can ever perfect be ;

Nor he who owns however little,  
nor he

Whom anger chains, can ever pass  
through Maya's gates ;

So give these up, Sannyasin bold !  
say

“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

सत्यं तत्र न भासते, यदि भवेत् कामो, यशो,  
लालसा

यां काञ्चित्पि पश्यति स्त्रियमयो पत्नीत्वभावेन यः ।  
मोक्षस्तस्य न शक्यते कथमपि,—स्वान्तस्ततः  
शुध्यताम्

सन्न्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

स्वल्पं चापि परिग्रहन्तु कुरुते, क्रोधेन यो बध्यते ।  
मायाद्वारविपाटनं न हि सखे ! दुष्टैर्हि सम्भाव्यते ।  
तस्मान्मोक्षविभावनाय सततं कामादिकं त्यज्य-  
ताम्

सन्न्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं ।

(11)

Have thou no home. What home  
can hold thee, friend ?

The sky thy roof ; the grass thy  
bed ; and food,

What chance may bring, well cooked  
or ill, judge not.

No food or drink can taint that  
noble self

Which knows itself. Like rolling  
river free,

Thou ever be, Sannyasin bold ! say

“ Om Tat Sat Om ” !

मिल ! त्वं ह्यनिकेतनो भव सदा— किं तद्गृहं  
यच्च भो !

त्वामाच्छादयितुं प्रभुर्भवति ? तु स्वाच्छादनं ते  
नमः ।

शय्या ते भुवि सुन्दरी दृणमयी—तत्र त्वया  
श्राम्यताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।

देवाः कथमवाप्य भोजनमयापकं सुसिद्धं तथा  
किञ्चिन्नैव विचिन्त्यतां, प्रियसखे ! ह्यनाच्च  
पान्नाच्च वा ।

आत्मज्ञो न हि लिप्यतेऽल भवता गंगावदाचर्यताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम्

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।

(12)

Few only know the truth ; the rest  
will hate

And laugh at thee, great one ; but  
pay no heed.

Go thou, the free, from place to  
place, and help

Them out of darkness, Maya's veil,  
without

The fear of pain or search for  
pleasure ; go

Beyond them both, Sannyasin bold  
say

Om Tat Sat Om ” !

सत्यं वेत्ति हि कश्चिदेव विबुधः, शेषस्तु विद्रि-  
क्ष्यते !

त्वां चैवोपहसिष्यति ह्ययं खलस्त्वं चोत्तमो वर्तसे ।  
हास्यद्वेषमतस्त्वया हि सुमहन् !—किञ्चिन्नैव  
वीक्ष्यताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।

स्वातन्त्र्येण च गम्यतां प्रियसखे ! देशाच्च देशं  
तथा,

मायामोहसमावृतांश्च कुरु भो ! मोहान्धकाराद्बहिः ।  
त्यक्त्वा कष्टभयं तथा सुखचयं-द्वन्द्वत्परं स्थीय-  
ताम्

सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओ ।

(13)

Thus, day by day, till Karma's  
powers spent

Release the soul for ever. No more  
is birth

Nor I or thou, nor God nor man.  
The "I"

Became the All, the All is "I"  
and Bliss.

Know thou art That, Sannyasin  
bold! Say

Om Tat Sat Om !

इत्थं चैव दिनादिनं भवति चेत् यावन्नि कर्मचयः  
आत्मा मोक्षमवाप्स्यति, ह्यथ पुनर्भावो न  
वर्तिष्यते ।

तस्मान्मृत्युमुखात् प्रमुच्य, भवता—स्वात्मन्य-  
वस्थीयताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं ।  
तत्रास्मन्न च शुष्मदस्ति च कुतो जीवेशभावभ्रमः  
राधे मय्यहमेव विश्रमखिलं, चानन्दरूपोऽस्म्यहम्  
नित्यानन्दमयश्च, भो ! त्वमग्नि तत् ब्रह्मेति  
निधीयताम्  
सन्यासिन् ! भव वीरभावभरितः सद्गीय उद्धोष्य-  
ताम् ॥

ओं तत् सत् ओं

(Concluded)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Examples of Sacrificial Rites

"Do thou behold," said Rama unto Lakshmana, "the beautiful wreath of smoke that rises in front of Prayaga. That is the sign of the worshipful Fire, and I infer some ascetic to be near." (Valmiki R. Ayodhya Kanda, Ch. 54)

The royal pilgrims were near the asylum of the venerable Bharadwaja and they soon made their salutations to the Maharshi who had finished his Agnihotra rites, and was seated at ease in the midst of his disciples.

When Rama himself, according to the saint's instructions, repaired to the Chitrakuta mountain, he resolved to purify his dwelling place by making a suitable offering to the deity presiding over it. "Do thou, O Lakshmana," said Rama unto his brother of auspicious look, "kill deer and swiftly bring it here. It behoves us to observe the rules prescribed by the scriptures. Do thou follow the ordinance." (Ch. 56)

Lakshmana promptly killed a sacred black deer, and threw it into flaming fire. And seeing it well scorched and hot and free from blood, he said to Rama, "Here is the entire black deer roasted by me, capable of serving any purpose. Do thou therefore worship the gods." The deer was accordingly sacrificed with the proper Mantras by Rama who performed in addition the Vaiswadeva, Raudra and Vaishnava rites. (Ch. 56)

Rama observed the daily sacrificial routine as well. And it was the smoke rising up from his sacred Fire that helped Bharata's men in locating his forest abode. "Fire cannot exist," argued they, "where there is no man present. It is evident that even here are the descendants of Ragu." (Ch. 93)

### Dasaratha's Aswamedha

Much earlier, in the Balakandam itself, Valmiki gives us an elaborate

description of the Horse-sacrifice that the king performed for securing male issue through divine grace. Regarding the numerous gifts to be made, we find Vasishta taking the "entire burden" and giving the following cautions, among others. "Prepare ye," said he, spacious apartments for the citizens and the dwellers of the provinces,—and separate quarters for the princes from foreign parts, and stables for horses and dressing rooms,—and wide apartments for native and foreign warriors.....Articles of food should be distributed duly *with respect*, and not with the indifference characteristic of festive occasions. *None should be disregarded* out of lust or passion. Do ye, with hearts mollified by *love*, act so, that all our friends may be *well pleased* with us."

Evidently it was well known in those days that the success of any worship or sacrifice would depend not merely upon the scrupulous observance of the rites in front of the altar, but also upon the *contentment and mutual love and co-operative spirit* of all the persons invited to attend it and witness the various functions. The elaborate preparations necessary for these ceremonies, the selection and purchase of articles, the invitations—all have to be done in a *reverent mood*, for they also form essential items of discipline and mind control, culminating in the moments of intense concentration near the altar. But nowadays this broader view of rituals is often lost sight of, and hence comes the disproportionate importance attached to the pouring of the ghee into the fire or the decoration of an image, irrespective of the impure thoughts and mind wanderings indulged in when the butter is melted or the flowers plucked.

### Yupas and Animals

Turning again to the Valmiki Ramayanam, we find mention made of many details connected with the sacrifice. The Yupas were planted, wrapped up in cloths and worshipped with flowers till they looked like the Seven Rishis in the welkin. "And that Fire-place of Dasaratha, consisting of three sides of eighteen bricks, looked like the golden-winged Garuda. And for the purpose of sacrificing them unto the respective deities were collected beasts and reptiles, birds and horses and aquatic animals. The priests sacrificed these in proper form. And to these Yupas were bound three hundred beasts as well as the foremost horses belonging to the king. Then Kausalya, having performed the preliminary rites, *with three strokes slew that horse, experiencing great glee*. With the view of reaping merit, she with an *undisturbed heart* passed one night with that horse furnished with wings." Its fat was then offered into the Fire along with various other parts, and the king "*smelt at the proper time the odour of the smoke*" agreeably to the scriptures. (Bala Kandan, Ch. 14)

### Interpretations and Meditations

Thus have been described the rituals, in the stories. The Upanishads have taken a different view. They have pointed out that rituals and worship, when performed with particular enjoyments in view, cannot lead man to the highest goal, *viz.*, freedom from the thralldom of Matter, with its double capacity of offering pleasure and inflicting pain. Some of them, like the Mundaka, have spoken of the "sacrificial raft" as too unsteady for any successful steering in the troubled waters of life. But some

others give subtle philosophic interpretations of the various ceremonies. The Brihadaranyaka, for example, begins with an elaborate explanation of the Aswamedha, this being "of all the rites the greatest." Says Sankaracharya in his famous commentary, \* "The horse which is a part of the sacrifice has to be purified. Hence its head and other parts of its body are to be looked upon as divisions of time, etc. And it will be raised to the status of Prajapati by being meditated upon as such. In other words, the horse will be deified into Prajapati if the ideas of time, worlds and deities be superimposed on it, for Prajapati comprises these. It is like converting an image etc., into the Lord Vishnu or any other deity." This meditation, which by itself gives the same benefit as the ritual, "leads to identity with Hiranyagarbha in his collective and individual aspects." The state of Hiranyagarbha, however, is not the highest, for it is also subject to change, though the place it occupies in the scale of transmigration is the topmost. The Upanishad then proceeds to give subtle and interesting explanations of such terms as Arka, Aditi or Aswa, and teaches that "Of all these the Self alone is to be realised," "This Self is dearer than a son," and so on.

### A New View of Soma

Some time back a book entitled "A True Interpretation of Vedic Sacrifice" † was brought out by a thoughtful student of the Vedas, Srimushna Narasimhacharya by name. After a special study of the

Soma sacrifice, he has written about it that as "implied in the Mantras of the Rig Samhita" it "seems to be different from the one observed nowadays," and he gives a long list of discrepancies. We give below a few of them.

"There are no Mantras," says he, "for the actual performance of Purodaca rites and slaughter of Pasu, though Tantric rites are done according to the ritual without any Vedic authority therefor. In the Rig Samhita, Agni alone is called the executioner (Rig 2-3-10) and slayer of Vritra (3-4-10, 10-110-10)...and not any priest."

"Sacrificial implements, vessels... grass, ghee, doors, stones, etc., are deified in the Rig Samhita and Yajurveda, but not in the sacrificial ritual, e.g., Adityagriha, Marutgriha, etc."

In the Pasu rites, besides, "fire is churned first and then the animal to be victimised is brought and tied to the sacrificial post...and then taken to the place of slaughter with fire carried before it by Agnidhra. There it is sacrificed unknown to others .....The intention of the sacrifice is to make the sacrificer "become the killer of Vritra and not of an animal, and no living animal is mentioned in the Mantra. From this it may be inferred that the killing of Vritra was actually done in a metaphorical sense during the time of the Rig Samhita, and this animal sacrifice was later on developed keeping the original Mantra. The executioners of the animal are not ordinary men, but divine ones who work with mortals in the human body (Tai. Bra. 3-6-61)... The fact of fire being taken by Agnidhra before the animal to be sacrificed, shows that it is not slaughtered in the ordinary way by

\*These translations are taken from the new Edition of Brihadaranyaka text and Sankaracharya's commentary brought out by Swami Madhavananda from the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Pages 960, Price Rs. 6.

† The book can be had of the author at 9, Kesava Perumal Eastward Street, Mylapore.

a sword, but killed in Agnidhra fire by the gods in a separate place unknown to the ordinary priests, and no Mantras too are recited on the occasion, proving the fact that there is no mortal immolator of the animal."

Then how did the actual killing creep in? And what is the significance of the "Soma sacrifice"? The author has got his answers and we refer the curious reader to his

book with its profuse references to the original works.

One thing, however, is clear. Our duty at the present time is to give suitable interpretations to the few *surviving* rituals, so that their performance may not be merely mechanical but may be helpful in developing mental vigour, broad-heartedness and similar virtues, stressed by all religious teachers from times immemorial.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDIAN INDUSTRY AND ITS PROBLEMS, VOL. I FACTORS IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: *By H. R. Soni, Department of Economics, Benares Hindu University. Published by Messrs Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., Pages 440, Price Rs. Ten.*

This book on Indian Industry and its Problems is the first of a series of three volumes projected by the author who proposes to give in them a programme of industrial reconstruction in India. He says in the preface, "I hope I have provided sufficient data in these volumes to prove that if a solution of the problem of industrial development is ever sought in India, a beginning will have to be made on the lines identical to those suggested by me. Indeed, I am prepared to go so far as to assert that although practical experience will necessitate re-adjustments and changes in the programme of industrial reconstruction, those readjustments and changes will affect only the details of action and not the principles on which this plan is based." It is a pity that all the three volumes have not been published together to enable the readers to have an idea of the plan the author proposes to give. But it is possible from a perusal of this volume to form an estimate of the author's approach to the problem which is based on a thorough examination of the existing conditions and tendencies and the reader is tempted to feel that the author

is not at all putting forth extravagant claims for his plan.

The opening chapter deals with the growth of factory industry in India. India, from the point of view of handicraft industry, was not by any means inferior to, but on the other hand on a higher level than, the contemporary Europe till very recent times. But owing to the development of modern factory system with all the readjustments and reorganisations that followed the industrialisation in the West, India began to lag behind for a time for various reasons, the chief of which was that India found herself in a very unsettled state after the death of Aurangzeb. No doubt, the decay of her handicraft industry was inevitable as the industrialised West went on extending her market for machine-made goods. But with the spread of modern education and scientific knowledge and growth of enterprise, Indian industry is gradually gaining ground and now she holds a high place among the industrial nations of the world.

The future development of industry in India depends on the extent of her various resources such as, an abundant supply of raw materials, sources of power, finance, organising ability of Indians and the policy of the Government. The author deals with these questions in this volume and promises to elaborate more fully certain problems in the forthcoming volumes. As regards raw materials, it is believed



that India holds a very advantageous position; her soil and climate are suited to the production of almost all kinds of agricultural, forest and animal products to meet the requirements of organised industries. But the author says, 'The production of a large number of raw materials is either totally absent or is so inadequate and disorganised that large modern factories cannot rely upon indigenous supplies.' The author pleads for Government action and guidance; and no doubt, in a backward and undeveloped country the initiative towards these reforms should come from the Government.

The two chapters on 'Sources of Heat and Power' give a thorough examination of India's resources in coal and electric power, and the author draws attention to the need for conserving India's coal resources. Indian coal is low-grade in quality, but this coal may be used most economically by utilising it to generate electric power which can be transmitted easily and much more cheaply over long distances. The author advocates the setting up of large generating plants and deals at length on the relative costs of electric power in Western countries and in India, and concludes that power can be generated and supplied in the coal and water-power-zones, at far cheaper rates; but of course all this depends on the extent to which industries avail themselves of hydro-electric power in India.

Problems like the availability of capital for industrial development, joint-stock enterprise, importance of foreign capital in India, and financing of industry are dealt with at great length in the two chapters on 'Finance and Management'.

Regarding labour, the author says that there are very few permanent industrial workers in India, that they are poor, illiterate and uneducated with a low standard of living, forming a class of unorganised unskilled labour. He examines the problem of labour and gives valuable suggestions for improving the condition of labour in India.

In the last two chapters entitled 'State Action' the author gives an

account of the policy of the Government regarding industrial development in India, pleads for the adoption of a definite industrial policy by the Government and advocates the rapid development of engineering and heavy chemical industries in India.

The book is written in an engaging style and makes very interesting reading.

V. B.

KALYAN ANNUAL (HINDI): *Published by (than) Shyamdas, Gita Press, Gorakhpur.*

This is the season when the hearts of devotees are thrilling with joy in expectation of the coming festival in honour of the Divine Mother. The Shakti Number of the Kalyan has therefore come at a most opportune time. This volume is profusely illustrated with coloured and other pictures of the various incarnations of the Mother. Erudite scholars, eminent Sannyasins and pious devotees have contributed articles dealing with the subject from different angles of vision. The pictures showing the different lotuses in the body, diverse images of the Deity and the temples scattered throughout the country, will be a source of great information and illumination. We wish the volume a wide circulation and hope that a similar one will be forthcoming shortly for the benefit of the English-knowing public.

S. A.

THE BUDDHA AND THE CHRIST: *By Canon B. H. Streeter. Published by Messrs. MacMillan & Co., Ltd. St. Martin's Street, London.*

The eight chapters of this book constitute the Bampton Lectures for the year 1932. The title of the book may make one think that it is a comparative study of Buddhism and Christianity. But it is not. In fact the exposition of Buddhism, which occupies a very small portion of the book, is only a background for the author to paint the Christian World-view, which is the real object of the book. But his presentation of the Christian World-view is neither narrow nor dogmatic. It breathes the modern

spirit of sympathetic understanding of the religious aspirations of peoples different from one's own, although the tendency to exalt the Christian ideal as the highest is amply manifest. What is still more valuable is the fact that the author has taken full cognisance of modern thought and has tried his best to harmonise the religious outlook with it.

The book opens with a learned chapter devoted for a brilliant re-statement of the scientific approach towards Reality. The author finds its method of measurement as inadequate to discover the most significant aspects of Reality. It can only give at best a skeleton or map of its subject. Its mathematical formulæ are as inadequate in conveying the full significance of Reality as the lines of a gramophone record are to represent the sweet cadences of music. Religion is the method of approach towards this higher aspect of Reality.

It is the main contention of the book that this higher aspect of Reality is vitally related to the element of personality which constitutes the highest form of existence known to us. In elaborating this view the author has disposed of the two other alternative views, *viz.*, that of Materialism, which looks upon ultimate Reality as a principle of inertness, and that of Absolutism which denies the reality of life, ethics and history in its attempt to free the ultimate Principle from every form of limitation. The author's criticism of the first hypothesis is right in view of the developments of 20th century Science, but his views of Absolutism show more of prejudice and ignorance than a sound insight into the conception of the Absolute. To him, as to many a Christian apologist, the Indian version of Absolutism is the most irreligious of conceptions, but Indian Absolutism is not, as the author points out, an objective representation of Reality. It is an attempt at understanding Reality from a position that is devoid of the polarities of subject and object. It is an experience of Reality through at-one-ment with It, an exploration of the mystery of existence

through the principle of self-awareness. In fact the conception of Absolute in Indian thought is nothing but an attempt to make a statement of Reality or God as that very Principle experiences Itself. To speak of such a conception as too 'thin,' meaning that it excludes the element of personality and all the richness characteristic of life, is to make a wrong statement of facts, at least as far as Indian thought is concerned. The Impersonal Absolute does not exclude, but on the other hand includes, the Personal and the world of phenomena. The Personal and the Impersonal are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. The scientific analogy of Streeter is not applicable in the matter of proving that the conception of the Absolute is an attempt at having an objective view of Reality; it is at least useful in conveying the relation of the Personal and the Impersonal. Just as the modern scientist's interpretation of the universe holds good side by side with our experience of it in ordinary life, the idea of the Impersonal remains without militating against the element of personality. More than that, Indian thought maintains that in the Impersonal alone, we get an adequate explanation of the Personal, and that the latter, without the former, degenerates into pure anthropomorphism, which Streeter is at pains,—to our mind, unsuccessfully,—to deny to a purely Personal conception of Reality.

If Reality is therefore a principle of intelligence in Its essential nature, having a vital relation to the personality of man, the problem naturally arises as to how such a conception may be reconciled with the undeniable facts of pain and suffering involved in life. The author's treatment of the subject, which forms the most important problem for all religions, is perhaps the most learned and instructive chapter of the book. He traces briefly the various stages of the Biblical reconciliation of this conflict,—how the Hebrews conceived suffering as penalty inflicted by God on a whole tribe for the misdeeds of any of its members; how they later on gave up this idea of group responsibility; how at a still later date they

outgrew this original notion of suffering as penalty and began to interpret it in terms of discipline and martyrdom; and how finally in Christ these last two ideas found the fullest development which has been tersely expressed in the passage: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Christ does not deny or explain suffering, but in him God reveals Himself as participating in the sufferings of the world. What God Himself suffers, man may well be content to bear patiently in the firm conviction that victory awaits him in the end.

We do not propose to criticise this view. It has given satisfaction to countless souls brought up in the Christian faith, and deserves therefore the reverence of even those who do not actually believe in it. But in view of the fact that the author has disposed of the Indian solutions of the same problem as embodied in the theories of Karma and Maya as *mere assumptions*, we must remark that these have been very elaborately worked out in Indian thought, and that if such a charge can be brought at all, it is more applicable to the Christian doctrine which tacitly assumes without proof the divinity of Jesus Christ. It is ultimately in the doctrine of Maya that the existence of suffering and the divinity of God find a satisfactory reconciliation.

Though we have expressed our disagreement with the author on many important points, we have no hesitation to remark that his book is one of the best expositions of Christianity we have come across. Free from narrowness and dogmatism, it has a universality about it that will appeal even to the mind of one who is not a professed Christian. Though it may not convince him in regard to all points, it

will certainly impress him that the doctrines expounded therein are profound and deserve close and reverent study.

MAN'S FOOD UNVEILED: *By M. K. Pandurangam. Published by the Bliss Cult Society, Ambattur, R. S., Madras, Pages 356.*

Hunger being the primary instinct of man, the problem of food becomes an important one. To the spiritual aspirant it is even more important. Many great men have said that control of mind becomes easy if it is accompanied by a proper discrimination in the matter of food.

In this book the author has approached the problem from the standpoint of the spiritual aspirant as well as the scientist. He begins with an introduction on Science and its empirical and consequently 'unreliable' nature; and pleads for the acceptance of Samyama (a kind of Yogic process) as the only means for accurate investigation. In the succeeding parts of the book which deal with the philosophy of nutrition, science and food, poisons, practice and proofs, the subject has been systematically developed with profuse quotations from eminent authors. It contains much valuable information regarding the analysis of the various articles of food. The importance of cocoanut as an article of diet is particularly stressed and tables containing the analysis of cocoanut from various standpoints, its amino acid content, etc., are given. In the chapter on practice, the beginner is given sound advice as to how to introduce a reform in diet, and certain very healthy preparations in the form of salads are also indicated.

We recommend the book to one and all for careful study and equally careful practice.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. Mission Home of Service Benares

The activities of the Home during the year 1933 were under the following heads:—

*Indoor General Hospital:* There are 145 beds in the various wards. The total number of cases admitted was 1,795 as against 1607 in the previous year. Of these 1254 were cured and discharged. 157 remained under treatment in the closing month of the year. The daily average number of indoor cases was 132. The total number of surgical cases in the indoor hospital was 197.

*Refuge for the helpless and aged Invalids and Paralytics:* There were 4 permanent inmates in this Refuge during the year. The Home owns a house at Dasaswamedh for accommodating helpless, aged and invalid women. There were 8 inmates in this House during the year under review. The entire expenses for food, clothing and other necessities are met from the funds of the Home. In the Refuge for Paralytics provided for under the trust fund created by Babu Radha Charan Sahab 3 paralytics found shelter.

*Dharamsala for the poor and helpless:* During the year about 150 people were given shelter and food under the Chandri Bibi Dharamsala Fund.

*Girls' Home:* In the Women's Department of the Home there were 4 girls of respectable families who, under the guidance of a competent lady superintendent, received education and also helped in the work of the Female Hospital conducted exclusively by lady workers.

*Outdoor Dispensary:* The total number of new cases treated during the year in the outdoor dispensary attached to the Home, including that of its branch at Sivala, was 44,765 as against 41,409 in the previous year and the total number of repeated cases was 71,246 as against 67,346 in the previous year.

The daily average attendance was 317 and the total number of surgical cases was 328.

*Outdoor help to Invalids and Poor Ladies:* Besides relieving the extremely helpless cases by admitting them in the Refuge of Invalids, the Home distributed weekly doles of rice and money to respectable men and women some of whom almost entirely depend upon this charity. During the year there were 126 permanent recipients of outdoor relief and it cost the Home Rs. 1,936-7-0 in cash and 131 mds. 28 srs. 4 chts. of rice and flour besides clothings and blankets.

*Special and Occasional Relief:* Almost daily people come to the Home for special help of one kind or other, e. g., a meal or clothing or school fees; 812 persons coming under this heading were given help during the year.

*Finance:* During the year the receipts under General Fund were Rs. 37,630-11-3 and expenditure Rs. 37,912-11-11 the receipts under the Building Fund were Rs. 7,954-15-0 and expenditure Rs. 7,193-14-5 and the receipts under N. C. Das Estate were Rs. 548-12-0 and expenditure Rs. 269-13-3. Thus the total receipts during the year were Rs. 46,134-6-3 and expenditure Rs. 45,376-7-7 resulting in a balance of Rs. 757-14-8.

### The Vivekananda Society, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta

The Society arranged 24 lantern lectures on the life of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in different parts of the City and suburbs, and 8 religious conversation classes under the Presidentship of eminent Sadhus of the Ramakrishna Order, in which there were religious songs, reading from Swamiji's works and discussion on the same. The 71st Birthday anniversary of the Swamiji was celebrated in a public meeting at the Albert Hall on the 26th January, 1933 under the Presi-

dentship of Sgt. Ramananda Chatterjee, M. A., with great success. In this connection more than one thousand pictures of Swamiji along with his message were distributed to the public from the Society's office. Another special meeting was held under the Presidentship of Dr. Kali Das Nag, M. A., D. Litt., in the same Hall on the 25th February 1933—in which Swami Paramananda, President, Ramakrishna Mission, Boston Centre, U. S. A., delivered a lecture on the "Need of the Hour" before a huge gathering. The Society also arranged 5 other public meetings at the Bengal Theosophical Hall, in which Sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Order and Professors of the different Colleges delivered lectures on Religious and Philosophical subjects.

Religious classes were held thrice in a week in the Society room. The Gita, Upanishads and the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna were read and explained. Worship and Pujas were duly conducted throughout the year and members were helped in practical meditation. In addition to these, Kali Puja and Saraswati Puja were celebrated with great enthusiasm by the Society members. Many ladies, gentlemen and children joined the ceremonies and greatly enjoyed. The Buddha Utsav was celebrated in the Mahabodhi Society under the Presidency of Dr. Nalinaksha Dutt.

The Bijoya Sammilani of the members of the Society was celebrated with great success in which there were Chandi-Kirtan, lantern lecture on Sri Ramakrishna and Kali-Kirtan. Nearly 1,000 people including ladies graced the occasion. One silver medal was awarded to the first in the Essay Competition on Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of Womanhood.

From the Homeo Charitable Dispensary, located at 40, Raja Nabu Krishna Street (at the premises of Babo Tincowri Mitra) 2593 patients were treated under the management of Dr. Ramaprasad Mukerji H. M. B. From the Public Library, 3596 books were issued and in the Free Reading Room books, magazines and newspapers continued to be used by the public as usual.

Four students were helped with monthly stipends to a total of Rs. 49 only. The Society has been of late feeling for want of funds much hampered in continuing the help it had been so long rendering to poor and deserving students. It therefore earnestly appeals to every kind-hearted soul to contribute to its funds and thereby help it materially and encourage it in its present future activities for the propagation of knowledge among the poor and needy.

### **Vedanta Society, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A.**

The Vedanta Society of Portland, Oregon, was founded and organized in 1925 by Swami Prabhavananda, and incorporated under the laws of the State of Oregon in 1928. After four years of intense work it was suspended for about a year and a half, during which time a number of sincere students kept up their interest in the study of the philosophy by holding meetings in the Central Library.

It was of great interest to this little group, as well as to the general public, when the work was re-opened on February 14, 1932, with Swami Devatmananda, formerly of New York Vedanta Society taking charge of the Centre.

For about eight months the work was carried on in a residential district on the East side. Then, for the better convenience of the public, the Society secured a hall for the Sunday evening Services and Tuesday classes, with a residence for the Swami in a newer residential district, where the Thursday evening class was held. Besides the regular activities the birthday anniversaries of the Great Teachers were celebrated. In order to stimulate independent thinking among the students, the Swami organised Forum sittings from time to time, all of which proved successful and beneficial to those taking part.

The work of the new season was opened on the 17th of September 1933, with fresh vigour, new activities and

bright prospects. One of the several welcome changes was the opening of the Sunday morning Service in the Masonic Temple, which was transferred six months later to the Chapel. The striking feature of this morning service is its devotional nature; and added to it, is a period of meditation which is very much appreciated by everybody. The evening Service, now being held in a hall in the Masonic Temple, is devoted to general, philosophical and psychological subjects.

After a little more than two years of successful work the Society has succeeded in securing a home of its own in a beautiful residential district on the West side of the city, and is now permanently established with all its activities concentrated thereat. The new home is called The Vedic Temple and is located at 1206 N. W. 25th Ave., on the corner of the street, with a frequent service of two street-cars available to the public. On the first floor there is a reception hall, with an entrance to a larger hall. This room leads to the chapel, where hang large paintings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda on each side of the pulpit. There is an accommodation for more than 70 people, and all social gatherings also are held here. On the upper floor, Swami has a large office and study, with a view over the gorgeous hills of Portland.

The Society moved to it on the 20th of April and held its first morning Service on Sunday the 22nd.

### **'Shivananda Memorial'**

Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission—the revered Mahapurush Maharaj of the devotees—has left the mortal body and joined the Spiritual Fraternity to which he belongs. But he has left behind him thousands of sincere disciples and admirers, both men and women, who are anxious to have his hallowed memory enshrined in a suitable Memorial of a permanent character.

The greatness of a people is tested by its power of appreciating its heroes. Signs are visible in all directions that the civilised people of all races have awakened to this noteworthy fact. India also has not lagged behind. It is seldom that a spiritual personality of the type of the great Swami Shivanandaji treads this earth of ours. It is therefore all the more necessary that a permanent Memorial should be built near the scene of his activities for the preservation of the memory of one of the greatest silent witnesses to the Eternal Truth, who by his mighty spiritual presence and his ineffable smile of love carved an indelible image in the minds of thousands of devotees who came in contact with him.

In order to satisfy this need as well as the burning desire of numerous earnest souls, it is proposed to erect a Memorial Students' Hostel at an estimated cost of Rs. 25,000, in the Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School Compound adjoining the precincts of the Belur Math. This is keenly felt as an urgent necessity as the boys have to live at present in workshops and thatched huts. The Swamiji took a keen interest in the School and showed his unfailing solicitude for the welfare of its poor students who daily received his blessings. We confidently hope that generous donations will flow in from all parts of the world, where the serene influence of the Swami Shivanandaji has spread, and that a Memorial Building, worthy of the name of Mahapurushji will come into existence within a short time.

All contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following address:—

SECRETARY, RAMAKRISHNA MISSION  
INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, BELUR MATH,  
DT. HOWRAH.

(SD.) SWAMI AKHANDANANDA,  
*President,*  
*Ramakrishna Math and Mission,*  
*Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.*



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman,"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

NOVEMBER, 1934

[No. 7

## HINDU ETHICS



एक एव दमे दोषो द्वितीयो नोपपद्यते ।

यदेनं क्षमया युक्तमशक्तं मन्यते जनः ॥

एकतोऽस्य सुमहाप्राज्ञ दोषः स्यात् सुमहान् गुणः ।

क्षमया विपुला लोकाः सुलुभा हि सहिष्णुता ॥

दान्तस्य क्रिमरण्येन तथादान्तस्य भारत ।

यत्रैव निवसेदन्तस्तदरण्यं स चाश्रयः ॥

There is only one fault in self-control. No second fault is noticeable in it. A person who has self-control is regarded by men as weak and imbecile.

O thou of great wisdom, self-control has only this one fault. But its merits are many. By forgiveness the man of self-control easily acquires extensive planes of awareness.

What need has a man of self-control for a forest? Similarly, O Bharata, of what use is the forest to him that has no self-control? That is a forest where the man of self-control lives, and that is even a sacred asylum.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CLX, 34, 35 and 36)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*Our people must have their married lives shaped after the model of the Master and they must practise continence at least partially. Otherwise there is no escape from utter destruction.*

**S**TILL the people with worldly bent of mind say hesitatingly, "But...." Well, we have understood you and tell you in reply what Swami Vivekananda used to say with regard to our spiritual practices, "You have thought each one of you will become a Ramakrishna Paramahansa. That is simply impossible. The world can have only one Ramakrishna,—'in one forest, there can live only one lion.'" The Master knew it fully well that it is beyond your capacity to live a married life and at the same time keep your vow of celibacy undefiled. Nevertheless he has set the example before you so that you may at least partially follow it. But bear it in mind that you should try to follow this noble ideal by looking upon the other sex as living images of the Divine Mother, and by offering your pure and unselfish love to them. If on the other hand, like the lower animals, you continue for ever to consider the sacred images of Motherhood as your slaves, as mere instruments for your sense-gratification, there is no way of escape; your destruction is certain and imminent.

Remember what happened to the Yadavas who paid no heed to the words of Sri Krishna. Bear in mind what great calamity befell the Jewish nation on account of their indifference to the warnings of Jesus Christ. Disregard for prophets has at all times been the cause of ruin for nations.

*A few objections to the Master's strict celibacy in married life, and their answers.*

With our reply to one more question here, we shall close this topic of the wonderful manifestation of the Teacher-aspect in the Master through his married life, and pass on to allied subjects. In spite of all these discussions the following thoughts are sure to arise in minds distracted by their outgoing tendencies, and slavishly attached to sense pleasures: 'Since the Master did marry, would it not have been better if he had cut off all physical connections with his wife only after having one issue at least? By so doing perhaps he could have shown that the continuance of God's creation is the duty of each human being. Along with that the scriptures also would have been properly obeyed. For, they enjoin upon each individual to have at least one issue so that he can free himself from the debt he owes to his forefathers.'



The following is our reply :

Is the creation actually so very limited as we see or imagine it to be? Variety is the law of nature. If from this very moment we all together begin to think and act in the same way, ere long the world will be completely destroyed. Further, we ask you, have you come to know all the laws for the continuance of the creation? And is it for perpetuating the creation that you have sacrificed your celibate life? Search your heart thoroughly and then come forward with the reply. See that there be no 'discrepancy between your thought and word,' as the Master would put it.

Well, let us take it for granted that you are following this particular law for the maintenance of the creation. Even then what right have you to urge others to do the same? It is no less a law of nature to desist from dissipating one's energies in lower pursuits with a view to attaining a nobler life by developing higher psychic powers. If every one remains busy like yourself in manifesting the lower powers only, who will then show the higher spiritual powers? Will not, in that case, the higher aspects become totally extinct?

It is our nature to pick out from the scriptures only those passages which are to our liking. This injunction regarding offspring has been selected in accordance with our nature. Because, for persons with a different kind of equipment, the same scriptures lay down,

'Whenever you are filled with the spirit of renunciation, on that very day you should leave the world.' As soon as the love of God increases and consequently one becomes indifferent towards the world, one should immediately sever all worldly connections. Therefore, if the Master would live according to your directions who would then honour this scriptural passage?

The same can be said on the question of debt to the forefathers. According to the scriptures, a true Sannyasin saves his seven generations upwards and seven generations downwards by his own merit. Hence we need not bother about the Master's debt to his forefathers.

*That the Master's marriage was actuated by his mood of the Teacher is clearly understood from the Holy Mother's lifelong devotion to the Master regarding him as the Mother of the Universe.*

Therefore it is clear that the Master's marriage was solely for our instruction. A rough idea of the noble ideal of married life he has set up for us, can be had from the fact that the Holy Mother (his wife) would all through her life, offer her whole-hearted devotion to him, looking upon him as the living presence of the Divine Mother. As a rule man cannot conceal his weak points from his wife although he can deceive all others. The Master would sometimes tell us in this connection, "All the big personalities, some of whom may be judges, others magistrates, can exercise their powers

over others only. But before their wives they shrink into insignificance, and become just their obedient servants. If any order comes from the better half, no matter right or wrong, none has got the power to disobey it!" Therefore, if it is found that because of a person's noble and pure life his own wife offers her heart's devotion to him and worships him throughout her life as God incarnate, it will prove beyond doubt that there is not the least fraud in what he professes to be. This proof can be applied to the Master with utmost confidence. Much remains to be said on the Master's unique relation of spiritual love with his wife. But this is not the place for it. Therefore we close the topic here with these few hints regarding the manifestation of the Teacher-aspect in him through his relation with his wife.

## BEFORE TUNING AND AFTER IT

### Queries from Within

**W**HAT is that, knowing which all things become known? This question has agitated the minds of thinking men in all ages. Often it is started by a sudden stroke of adversity. It then continues to press for an answer, at least till the wheel of fortune turns round and offers a refreshing experience or two to balance the pains endured. But the call can come in the midst of material prosperity too. One may very well hear it when surrounded by friends and enjoying the comforts that wealth can fetch. For the mind may easily rise above their pulls and strive, although without any definiteness at the start, to establish connection with the Great Unknown.

It may look up at the vast canopy of twinkling stars overhead and yearn to hear the Song of Creation they seem to be singing

all night long. It may gaze thoughtfully at the "watery kingdom whose ambitious head spits in the face of heaven", at the dark-blue ocean "in which the Almighty's form glasses itself in tempests" and makes it a pleasing terror at times. This vast expanse of water has managed to remain unchanged and looks just as it did "when creation's dawn beheld" it! What is the secret of its permanence, while on its shores only heaps of ruins, "past Redemption's skill," remain to indicate the glory of those empires which human wills raised up for a time? Where have all those heroes gone, who planned and hoped and struggled on till men and things obeyed their glance, till success itself followed meekly in their wake? Where also are those other adventurous spirits gone, who dared resist the imperious urge of endless desires, and could generate out of their torrential sweep, energy enough for

making internal and external worlds equally illumined? How did they accomplish this mighty task? When thoughts were hushed and sense of ego sublimated into intense awareness, did they as well succeed in stopping the indistinct, yet blissful and rhythmic throbbing of "I" upon their exquisitely tuned mental receiver? Could they also lift this final veil of all?

### Two Kinds of Knowledge

These and many other questions surge up within at various stages of our life-pilgrimage and set up an inner churning until proper solutions are reached. Saunaka, noted for his great sacrifices, we read, failed to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion regarding these topics, and so sought the advice of saint Angiras, approaching him in the prescribed manner and mood. "Two kinds of knowledge," replied the sage, "are to be acquired, of which one may be called superior and the other inferior. The latter is conveyed by the various scriptures, with their sections and sub-sections down to grammar and the science of the stars. The superior is that by which the Imperishable One is reached." The function or *Apara* or the lower

kind is to supply correct ideas, while *Para* or the higher consists in their practical application in daily life. Correct ideas are obtained by a thorough study of available sacred works, necessarily involving the methods of comparison and contrast, of healthy discussions and reconciliation of apparent discrepancies. This course becomes complete only when there arises an intellectual grasp of the main and subsidiary goals pointed out by scripture, and of the steps that have to be taken to arrive at them in a systematic manner.

Practical application requires a skilful handling of one's mental equipment. The mind is a delicate instrument and no violent measure ought to be attempted in bringing it under control. For each mind there is a line of least resistance. This has to be found out and duly kept in view while introducing spiritual exercises into the daily routine. The aim should be all along to provide greater opportunities for the manifestation of existing virtuous tendencies and to awaken and bring to the forefront such of the dormant ones as will help to round up the personality in due course. Until the full technique is mastered and dexterity acquired to maintain the different strings in the proper tension, the song of life is sure to be marred by discordant notes every now and then. If these prerequisites are absent, the divine music of the soul, smooth, melodious and blissful, can only remain a mere possibility of the distant future.

1. शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदु-  
परात्रः पप्रच्छ । कस्मिन्तु भगवो विज्ञाते  
सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥  
तस्मै स होवाच । द्वे विधे वेदितव्ये इति  
.....परा चैवापरा च ॥ तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो  
यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिञ्चा कल्पो  
व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति ।  
अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ॥

### Before being Tuned

Meditation, in the widest sense, is the methodical tuning and handling of the mind. At one extremity stands what we imagine to be our normal mind which, however, is in reality but a distracted mind. Desires, without which its life-energy dries up, are no doubt acting on it at all times. But they have not been classified and grouped by any conscious effort. Nor is any satisfactory arrangement made as to the order in which they should seek to obtain their ends. This chaos is bound to reign, because the main objective in life has not been even tentatively fixed. There is no absorbing passion raised up to act as a standard, referring to which other desires can be assigned fitting places in a descending order of importance. Nor has discrimination been employed to find out which of the desires have a reasonable chance of being satisfied and which not. Success in any undertaking depends upon our putting forth the proper effort when external circumstances are more or less favourable. But in our uncontrolled state we often allow the mind to be swayed by desires and passions quite unsuited to the forces playing around us. Being obsessed by the enjoyments aimed at, we also fail to retain enough clarity of mind to perceive who might be friendly and who unfriendly. This habit, if persisted in, invariably lands us in disaster, and drives us into the vicious corner from which the world appears to be bent upon thwarting our legitimate purposes.

Even if action is commenced after due consideration is given to time and place, our suspicious mind can yet pull itself back by the operation of keys hitherto untouched. It may get into the fear that in spite of all calculations, dread Chance might step in and deprive us of our deserved victory. If we analyse what thoughts come to us and how we conduct ourselves in moments of crisis, we shall very likely see either that we believe our God Himself to be Chance or that we regard the deity of Chance to be capable of neutralising what God may grudgingly grant as compensation for our troubles. Chance, as we have it in our mind, may not rest content with obstructive tactics alone. It may appear also in the form of death and snatch us away from the field of our activities when success is already in sight. Many a great man has suffered from this caprice of powers beyond human control. There is of course talk about an existence after death; but who knows anything definite about it? Each religious system does offer a few hints; but our perverse mind gets more frightened by the punishments said to be meted out for sins, than encouraged by the prospect of receiving grace for the virtues we strive to maintain in daily life!

These tendencies of the mind, although not all manifest when our affairs seem to be prospering, do yet remain beneath the surface like dangerous rocks destined to wreck our life-boat when rough weather sets in and any careless movement

of the rudder leads to certain death. They are like the members of an executive council, who keep up a permanent opposition, give dissenting votes or talk out proposals when safety requires that they should be unanimously carried and speedily put into execution. It is these same neglected dangerous elements of our inner structure that prepare the ground for the very failure which we apprehend all the time, but which could be easily averted by an intelligent application of the principles of meditation.

### When Tuning is over

The tuned mind experiences no civil war. It may enter into numerous departments of life's activities and specialise in each. But when it has to act, there is no conflict within it. Its varied interests have been harmonised and made to rally round a ruling passion, in whose majestic current self and others are co-swimmers and sharers but never competitors. At a moment's notice its entire energies can be summoned and directed into any given channel for any length of time. Such a man always acts with his whole mind. He does not believe in any Chance that can interfere with Law. To him, Law is made by God; and what we call Chance is only the working of an unknown Law. Nay, God is All-embracing Law in his eyes; and he continues to act with correct aims with the firm conviction that to that extent divine grace cannot help manifesting itself as the legitimate fruits. And the fruits

that come to him are meant for all. Of what can such a man be afraid? The doer of good can never come to serious grief: न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्गतिं तत गच्छति। He is afraid, if at all, only of putting forth less effort than is needed for overcoming the resistance offered by inert as well as changing men and things. But he knows that the continuous pressure of correct aims must sooner or later open up his vision and make the supply of his ideas and actions fit in with the demands made upon him. Law or God's grace can be trusted to do that work.

### No Fear of Death and Punishment

Life after death can never worry him. If he has regulated himself according to the highest Law he could conceive of, while a perfectly obedient body and mind transmitted the impulses without any hitch anywhere, what harm can death do to him? किं कश्चित् वै यमः? Whatever be the life that continues after passing through death's gateway, the Law that has operated on this side cannot suddenly develop into Chance and create contrary forces on the other side without any rhyme or reason. God might give chastisement for sins committed on this side! True, for argument's sake; but if we have been reacting to human enemies and their persecutions only with a desire to lighten their burdens and chasten their vision, could we not accept with the same coolness all the happenings on the other side as well?

Why should we brood helplessly on the Lord as the holder of the rod of chastisement? We ought rather to regard Him as the reservoir of grace, which unhesitatingly flows out in a fourfold manner at *our will*,—first in the form of the thoughts we entertain, secondly as the actions that we follow them up with, thirdly as the refraction of these actions in the shape of fruits under the action of Law, and lastly as *our own readjustment*, as the *valuable lessons we learn* on experiencing those fruits, some of which must be pleasant and some painful. The ink in a fountain pen flows out in the shape of the letters we write. If silly things are visible on our paper, it is not because the ink refused to flow and denied its grace, but because we did not choose to write the good things we want at present. This example and this way of looking at things show the tuning philosopher what to do from now onwards in spite of all that has happened hitherto. And to do them, instead of philosophising on the past, is in his opinion the highest mark of human wisdom.

### Limit of Measurement

We may call his philosophy utilitarian or anything else, meaning thereby that it is incomplete and not true from the absolute standpoint of Truth. We may criticise him from various other angles also. But the fact remains that he has evolved from a distracted state of mind into a harmonised one. What his mind has to do with the Abso-

lute, how can we accurately measure, and prove or disprove? Measurable things are all relative, and any permanent organisation of them is possible only with the help of a relatively absolute standard. Our reducing the mind to *the Absolute* state and measuring it from *the Absolute* standpoint must therefore always remain a wild goose chase. The Hindu philosopher naturally takes up the position that the soul is immeasurable, and that the measurable is only a combination of matter, of which mind is one form, highly refined no doubt. We are free to analyse this material substance, mind, to our heart's content and infer the level of realisation its owner has reached. We may make a research and find out, by inferring from data supplied by the behaviour of the mind, whether he is still entangled within the network of its numerous strands and engaged in reducing them to order, so that it can act as a whole and faithfully transmit the glory of the soul into the world of thoughts, actions, fruits, and readjustments. We may also infer if he has accomplished this task, got release from all meshes of the mind, transcended it clean, and surrendered it to the Mercy of the Forces of the Universe, in other words, to the Feet of the Lord as Law.

### Scope of Meditation

Meditation in the widest sense, covering all spiritual exercises, is the ordered process for evolving the aspirant into this harmonised and

transcendent state. The exercises must necessarily be varied to suit the different defects of character, the different types of discord existing in each individual, and the different degrees of tuning effected. We may roughly classify these as two-fold,—exercises to achieve the tuning or harmonisation of the various strands, and exercises for tuning this harmonised mind itself to various planes of reality till it stands with an all-comprehensive tuning, waiting for the day when its forces get spent and it too "dies."

Yoga Shastra, which is India's higher Psychology, lays down five main steps for the first kind of tuning and three for the second. Yama and Niyama,—unfortunately ignored by modern enthusiasts of Yoga practice, who consequently develop either into general non-believers or into invalids of various grades—are purificatory habits to last as companions to the beating of the heart. They are, like the Sruti and Laya of the musician, to form part and parcel of any song of life that may be sung. Asana or posture, and Pranayama or the process of getting voluntary control over subtle nerve currents, are special exercises to check restlessness and bring order into the physical mechanism to develop its transmitting powers. Pratyahara is the method of collecting the scattered energies of the mind from their usual gates of exit, namely the sense organs or the impressions of sense experiences, both pleasurable and painful, so that

they can later on be focussed at will on any object, idea or plane.

In all these steps, concentration of the mind is practised; and this is very loosely called meditation. But this exercise is really only on the level of the intense application to "one thing" suggested by Patanjali. The function of this loose kind of meditation is to undo the disturbing factors like disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, sloth, worldly-mindedness, false notion, missing the point, instability, pain, despair, nervousness, irregular breathing and so forth. This "one thing" can be of various types. After enumerating some, the Sutras lay down what may be called the general principle in "यथाभिमतध्यानाद्वा," "Or by meditating according to one's predilection." The Ishtam chosen for this purpose can also be retained for the higher stages of the practice. Let us remember, however, that what we style "our" meditation is often no more than this elementary practice by whose repetition the disturbances indicated are overpowered.

Dharana or fixing of the attention on any object, "internal" or

2. व्याधिस्त्यानसंशयप्रमादालस्यविरतिभ्रान्ति-  
दर्शनालब्धभूमिक्त्वानवस्थितत्वानि चित्त-  
विक्षेपास्तेऽन्तर्गताः ॥ दुःखदौर्जनस्याह-  
मेजयत्वश्वासप्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः ॥  
तत्प्रतिषेधार्थं एकतत्त्वाभ्यासः ॥
3. एकस्मिन्कस्मिंश्चिदभिमतं तत्त्वं ऽभ्यासश्चेतसः  
पुनः पुनर्निवेशनं कार्यं । यद्वालात्प्रत्युदि-  
तायामेकाग्रतायां विक्षेपाः प्रणाशमुपयान्ति ।

"external," \* is the beginning of meditation proper. This merges into Dhyana and gradually into Samadhi. Here the harmonised mind flows with its entire force in any one direction till the truth in that direction is intuited. It would be profitless at this stage to dwell on the Shastra beyond this point.

### Value of Devimahatmyam

Devimahatmyam certainly does not come under the Para or higher Vidya pointed out by Angiras. It

4. "शुभाश्रया वाद्या हिरण्यगर्भ-वासव-प्रजापतिप्रभृतयः" (external) and "नाभिचक्रे हृदयपुण्डरीके मूर्ध्नि ज्यातिपि नाभिकाये त्रिङ्गाप्र इत्येवमादिषु" (internal).

is not even Veda proper. It is simply a part of the Markandeya Purana; and there are many other Puranas containing stories on its model. It can only be a section of Apra or lower Vidya. Relatively it is more valuable for mental tuning than either grammar or the science of the stars, which also form part of Apra. It is of course not entirely philosophical as the Upanishads mostly are. Neither is it a systematised exposition of practical psychology like the Yoga Shastra. Yet it contains philosophy and helps enough for Yogic meditations in the loose sense as well as in the technical sense. We shall see where, how and to what extent.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

**I** WENT to the Udbodhan office in the evening. The Mother lay in bed. Radhu also lay by her side on another mat, and was pressing her to tell a story. The Mother requested me to tell one instead. I was in a quandary. I did not know what to say. I knew the story of Mirabai, the great Vaishnavite saint. I narrated it. As I recited the song of Mirabai which ends in the line, "God cannot be realised without love," the Mother cried out in an exalted mood, "Yes, it is very true. Nothing can be achieved without sincere love." But Radhu did not appreciate the story very much. Sarala at last

came to my rescue. She told a story from the fairy tales. That pleased Radhu. The Holy Mother was very fond of Sarala. She was the nurse of Golap-Ma, and so she left the room after a while.

### Trained to Massage

Then Radhu asked me to massage her feet. She was not pleased with it and requested me to give a harder massage. The Mother said, "Sri Ramakrishna taught me the art of massaging by massaging my own body. Let me see your hand." I stretched my hand toward her. She showed me how to massage.

Radhu very soon fell asleep. The Mother said, "The mosquitoes are



biting my feet. Please pass your hand gently over them." She was quiet for a while and then said, "This year is a very bad one for the Belur Math. Baburam, Devabrata and Sachin have passed away." I have heard that Swami Brahmananda had seen disembodied spirits in the Udbodhan Math a few days before the death of Devabrata Maharaj. I asked her about the incident.

### Holiness Scorching

The Mother said : "Please talk softly, my child ; otherwise they will be frightened. Sri Ramakrishna also often saw things like that. One day he had been to the garden house of Benipal with Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda). He was strolling in the garden when a spirit came to him and said, 'Why have you come here? We are being scorched. We cannot endure your presence. Leave this place at once ! How could it stand his purity and holiness? He left the place with a smile. He did not disclose it to anybody.

### Master's Surprise Arrival

"Immediately after supper he asked some one to call for a carriage. It was previously arranged that he would spend the night there. A carriage was brought and he returned to Dakshineswar that very night. I heard the sound of the wheels near the gate. I strained my ears and heard Sri Ramakrishna speaking with Rakhal. I was startled. I thought, 'I do not know if he has eaten his supper. If not, where shall I get any food for him at this dead

hour of the night?' I always used to keep something in store for him, at least farina. He would ask for food at odd hours. I was quite sure of his not coming back that night, and so my store was empty. All the gates of the temple garden were locked and barred. It was one o'clock in the morning. He clapped his hands and began to repeat the names of the gods. Somehow the gate opened. I was thinking anxiously what to do for his food in case he was hungry. He shouted to me, 'Don't be anxious for my food. I have finished my supper.' Then he narrated to Rakhal the story of the ghost. Rakhal was startled and said, 'Dear me ! It was really nice of you not to tell me about it at that time. Otherwise my teeth would have been set on edge through fear. Even now I am shaking.' " The Mother ended the story with a hearty laugh.

"Mother," said I, "those spirits must have been foolish. Instead of asking him for their liberation, they told him to go away."

Mother : They will, no doubt, be liberated. His presence cannot be in vain. Once Naren (Swami Vivekananda) liberated a disembodied spirit in Madras.

### Interpretation of Dream

I narrated one of my dreams to the Mother. I said, "Mother, I once dreamt that I was going to some place with my husband. We came across a river the other bank of which could not be seen. We were going by the shady track

along the river, when a golden creeper so entwined my arms that I could not free them from it. From the other side of the river came a dark-complexioned boy with a ferry-boat. He said, 'Cut off the creeper from your arm and then only will I take you across the river.' I cut off almost the whole creeper but the last bit I could not get rid of. In the meantime my husband also disappeared. In despair I said to the boy, 'I cannot get rid of this bit. You must take me to the other side.' With these words I jumped into the boat. It sailed and my dream vanished."

The Mother said, "The boy whom you have seen is none other than Mahamaya, the great Illusionist, who took you across the waters of the world in that form. Everything, husband, wife or even the body, is only illusory. These are all shackles of illusion. Unless you can free yourself from these bondages, you will never be able to go to the other shore of the world. Even this attachment to the body, the identification of the self with the body, must go. What is this body, my darling? It is nothing but three pounds of ashes when it is cremated. Why so much vanity about it? However large or beautiful this body may be, its culmination is in those three pounds of ashes. And still people are so attached to it. Glory be to God!

### Example of Musk-deer

"Once I spent a couple of months at Kailwar in the District

of Awah. It is a very healthful place. Golap-Ma, Baburam's mother, Balaram's wife and others were with me. The country abounded in deer. A herd of them would roam in the form of a triangle. No sooner did you see them than they would flee away like birds on the wing. I never before saw anything running so swiftly. Sri Ramakrishna would say, 'Musk forms in the navel of the deer. Being fascinated with its smell, the deer run hither and thither. They do not know where the fragrance comes from. Likewise God resides in the human body, but man does not know it. Therefore he searches everywhere for that bliss, not knowing that it is already in him.' God alone is real. All else is false. What do you say, child?"

The Holy Mother had pimples all over her body. She said, "I have been suffering from this ailment for the last three years. I do not know whose sin I have been suffering from in this body. Otherwise how is it possible for me to get any disease?"

### Adjustment to Others' Levels

One day I went to see the Mother in the evening. A few girls from the Sister Nivedita Girls' School were with her. There were, among them, two young girls from Madras. The Mother had been inquiring about their study. Coming to learn that they knew English, the Mother asked, "Well, translate this sentence, into English 'Now we shall go home.'" One girl asked the

other to translate it. The elder one made the translation. The Mother again asked, "What will be the English translation of 'What will you eat at home?'" She was very pleased to hear the reply. At last she asked if they knew how to sing. They replied in the affirmative. The Mother asked them to sing in their native dialect. They sang a song. The Holy Mother began to laugh with evident pleasure.

After a few days, I went again to see the Mother. A little later Durgadidi of Gauri-Ma's School came there with two young girls. They

prostrated before the Mother. She blessed them by placing her hand on their heads. Then she asked the younger one, who was about eight years old, "Do you know how to sing?" She said, "Yes." Then she sang a song. The girl was trained by Gauri-Ma. They imitated her voice exactly. The Mother was surprised and exclaimed, "Well, she sings just like Gauri-Ma. Gauri-Ma is alive. Otherwise I would have thought she has been possessed by her ghost!" She kissed the girl tenderly and asked her to come another day and sing for her.

## ZOROASTRIANISM \*

*By K. D. Choksy*

IN these days of the exceptional material progress of modern civilisation with its scientific achievements, Zoroaster and other old-world teachers might be deemed out-of-date. "What earthly use," the twentieth century hero might say, "is there in turning to the light of an ancient nation?" Safe as he is amidst the splendours of the new world, in an age of great discoveries and inventions, culminating in the most intricate flying machines and wireless telegraphy, how much can the age-worn pages of the Zend Avesta (sacred writings) help a restless soul?

### **For All and for Ever**

But, however antiquated the Hymns of Zoroaster may be,

however remote the times when Persia held sway over many countries, Ancient Iran (Persia) can as a Mother of mothers, teach the modern world some sound lessons in wisdom and truth. With righteousness and faith within her heart she can still deliver messages which the modern world must hear with patience. Zoroastrianism has been tested by the touchstone of Time and has proved to be a mine of spiritual gold. He taught not for one age or for one people but for all ages and all peoples.

Prophets come and pass away at certain critical moments in the world's history. They are bearers of religious torches, eternally inspired by their great ideals. The

\* A paper read at the Conference of Religions in Ceylon, which was held as part of the programme of the Celebration of the 97th Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna.

ideal of purity and light taught by Zoroaster of Iran (Persia), the ideal of perfect sacrifice taught by Jesus of Nazareth, the ideal of renunciation and selflessness taught by the Buddha of Gaya, and that of unity by the Prophet of Mecca are all Undying Lamps for every age and for every country. Imperfect as we are, we need to be reminded again and again of these laws of life. Man needs these ideals to complete the great cycle of evolution from the thoughtless and speechless creature to the divinely inspired genius.

Dr. Martin Haug says he cannot assign to Zarathustra a later date than about 2300 B.C. Thus he lived not only before Moses but even perhaps before Abraham. If we consider the early age in which he lived, it is not surprising that the high and lofty ideas which he proclaimed were early misunderstood and misinterpreted; for he stood far above his age. So he was the first prophet of truth who appeared in the world and kindled a fire which thousands of years could not entirely extinguish.

### Virtues Stressed

The whole fabric of Zoroastrianism is based upon the three virtues of Purity of thought, Purity of speech and Purity of action. The great Zoroastrian Law is Purity. It is the dominant note which sounds again and again throughout our sacred scriptures. We have to harness, curb and subdue Evil. When a man makes honest efforts

to cleanse himself day by day of his evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds, then will follow in their wake, as does the day the night, good thoughts, good words and good deeds. But the contrary method of merely harbouring good thoughts, words and deeds will not be so effective, for the evil thought, word and deed, that lay slumbering in us for years, will wake up at an unguarded moment and take possession of our souls. Purity ought therefore to be carefully distinguished from innocence. No man can call himself pure until he has met and overcome the evils and temptations which beset his path, and subdued and turned to nobler channels the passions with which he is born. Just as gold needs to be put in a crucible before it can be freed of its dross, so a man needs to be put in the larger crucible of the world's rough and seductive ways before he can rightly consider himself to be free of earthly dross.

Truth is deemed the basis of all excellence, while virtue alone is happiness in this world; and its path, the way of peace. Good actions are considered most acceptable sacrifices to God; industry is deemed a guard to innocence and a bar to temptation. Hospitality, philanthropy and benevolence are strongly inculcated, while untruth is paraded as the worst of sins, wickedness as the garment of shame, and idleness as the parent of want. Zoroastrianism teaches that God has provided the soul with

every kind of aid to perform successfully the work given to it to do. Among the chief aids are knowledge, wisdom, sense, thought, action, free will, religious conscience, practical conscience, a guiding spirit or good genius and above all, the Revealed Religion. A disciple of Zoroaster was taught to seek only after the good, the true and the beautiful. All his life was to be attuned to these. The senses being kept purely operating on things of purity, when the man communed with his soul it was through these three qualities that he learned to know his God.

### Behind the Symbols

Tradition tells of altars raised on rocky heights whence the eye might roam over a glad bright world bathed in the light of God's angel, the Sun, and telling the heart that all was good. And if in after ages, men with eyes less spiritual could not see beyond the symbol and lifted up their prayers and praises to that minister of God, filled with love and simple adoration for the glorious gift of light and life, of strength and beauty, —are we ones to carp and sneer? But the lowliest follower of Zoroaster knew even then, as he knows today, that the Sun is but a symbol of God and Fire is the Sun's representative on earth. Thus though the Parsi may turn Sunwards or to the Fire upon the altar in contemplative worship, it is only that he may by these pure symbols be enabled to understand, to some slight extent, the glory lying far

beyond them. They who saw in the Fire and the Sun the ministers of God's good will made no images of the Imageless. Zoroaster, their great teacher, directed them to turn towards the Sun or the Fire when they prayed, but the prayers which they recite in this position are addressed solely to the Sovereign Being and not to the symbols of Him.

### The Philosophy of Zoroaster

In the "Light of Asia" a question is raised to this effect:—

How can it be that Brahmā

Would make a world and keep it miserable,

Since, if, all-powerful, He leaves it so,

He is not good; and if not powerful,

He is not God?

And likewise after two thousand five hundred years, a man of ordinary intelligence, looking at the world around him and finding it full of strange contradictions and in a state of hopeless medley, puts to himself the same question. He has been, in all probability, taught from his very childhood that God is good and all-powerful, and as he grows up and sees the imperfections and the evils prevalent in the world, his faith in the comfortable doctrine of the all-goodness and all-powerfulness of his Creator begins to waver. For he argues, and quite rightly, that if God is all-powerful and His intentions are always for the good of His creatures, why could He not have His will exercised

in the world and put a stop to the evil and wickedness that he finds around him. And since evil and wickedness undoubtedly prevail in the world, he naturally comes to the conclusion that God is either not all-powerful or not all-good. This great problem engaged the attention of wise men of the remotest antiquity, just as it does those of our own generation. One day thousands of years ago, Zarathustra stood before the sacred Fire surrounded by a circle of his numerous followers, meditating on this question of questions. Having contemplated the beams of Fire for a long time with a most pious mind, he lifted his divine countenance to his followers and said :—

“I will now tell you who are assembled here the wise sayings of Mazda, the praises of Ahura,\* and the hymns of the good spirit, the sublime truth which I see arising out of these sacred Flames. In the beginning there was a pair of Twins, two spirits, each of a peculiar activity; these are the Good and the Base, in thought, word and deed. Choose one of these two spirits. Be good, not base.” This pair of Twins solves the difficult problem of the world better than any other philosophical system that the human mind has ever conceived.

“This and this alone,” says Mr. Samuel Laing, “seems to me to afford a working hypothesis which is based on fact, and can be brought into harmony with the

existing environment and embraces in a wider synthesis all that is good in other philosophies and religions.”

Dr. Martin Haug says: The opinion so generally entertained that Zarathustra was preaching a Dualism, that is to say, the idea of two original independent spirits, one good and the other bad, utterly distinct from each other, and one counteracting the creation of the other, is owing to a confusion of his philosophy with his theology. Having arrived at the grand idea of the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being, he undertook to solve the great problem which has engaged the attention of so many wise men of antiquity and even of modern times, *viz.*, how are the imperfections discoverable in the world, the various kinds of evils, wickedness, and baseness, compatible with the goodness, holiness, and justice of God? This great thinker of remote antiquity solved this difficult question philosophically, by the supposition of two primal causes, which, though different, were united, and produced the world of material things, as well as that of the spirit. Having realised the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being, Zoroaster called God “the Creator of the earthly and spiritual life, the lord of the whole universe, in whose hands are all the creatures.” There are important passages in the Gathas\* to show that in God were united both the spirits. Likewise in the Bhaga-

vad Gita we hear Sri Krishna say : "I am generation and dissolution. I am sunshine and rain, I am death and immortality, I am entity and non-entity. The various qualities incident to natural beings, such as pleasure and pain, birth and death, fear and courage, renown and infamy, all distinctly come from Me."

### Explanation of Apparent Dualism

Polarity is only a scientific term for the two Primal Principles of Zoroaster. In a magnet with its two poles we see it in its simplest form. For what is a magnet? It is only a special manifestation of the all-pervading law of polarity by which energy, when passing from the passive into the active state, does so by developing two opposite or apparently conflicting forces of action and reaction, so that there could be no positive without a negative and no North Pole without a corresponding South Pole—like ever repelling like and attracting unlike. In chemical affinities and repulsions of atoms we see the same law manifested.

When we come to the organic world, that is, from the simpler to the more complex forms, we find that polarity is no longer a simple question of attraction and repulsion at the two ends of a magnet or at the opposite poles of an atom. It appears rather as a general law under which, as the simple and absolute becomes complex by evolution, it does so under the condition of developing contrasts or opposite

polarities by which one half of the organic world maintains and is maintained by the other half. For instance the plant takes in through its leaves the carbon dioxide of the air and decomposes it, building the framework by fixing the carbon in its root, stem, and branches and setting free the oxygen. The animal exactly reverses the process ; inhales the oxygen thus set free, and combining it with the carbon of its food, exhales carbon dioxide. Thus a complete polarity is established : the plant and the animal act as necessary complements of each other, where the existence of either would be impossible without the other.

Again, as we ascend the scale of creation, we come to the polarity of sex. Here the distinction is not so fundamental as that of the plant and the animal. There is an identity of essence at the base of the two sexes, developing itself by the principle of polarity in opposite directions. Not exactly in opposite but in different directions ; and being unlike, the sexes attract each other with a kind of chemical affinity. Each has what the other has not ; each completes the other, and is completed by the other ; they are in nothing alike and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give. The woman asks for strength, active courage, and all the sterner qualities of men in which she is by nature deficient. The man, on the other hand, asks for gentleness, sub-

missiveness, and the rest of the softer virtues of woman in which he likewise is inherently deficient.

In Biology we find the same law of polarity, so that life is evolved and balanced by the two conflicting forces of heredity and variation. In Astronomy we have the centripetal and centrifugal forces. In Mathematics we have for every plus a corresponding minus, and for every multiplication a corresponding division. In Nature we have the seemingly opposing conditions of day and night. Yet both are necessary to give an interchange of work and rest so necessary for all organic life. In Politics, likewise, we have two great opposing forces, the rulers and the ruled. Society has ever been divided into two contrary forces of master and servant. Both are necessary and nothing can do away with them. In Ethics, again, we have the two opposing poles of right and wrong; virtue and vice; good and evil. The one is unthinkable without the other, and both are necessary. In Metaphysics we have the dualism of body and soul; free will and destiny; real and ideal; objective and subjective; phenomenon and noumenon; matter and spirit; reason and intuition.

### **Nature's Pairs**

In our daily round of life we come across these twins in their manifold aspects of the rich and the poor; the strong and the weak; hope and fear; joy and sorrow; love and hatred; pleasure and pain; victory and defeat; labour and

thought; work and play. Both are indispensable, and we can no more get rid of the one without at the same time getting rid of the other.

Nature is like a mighty balance holding in its scales an absolutely equal quantity of the two opposite states of things. If a quantity of evil is put into one of the scales, an equal quantity of good is put that instant automatically into the other. In fact there is, as Emerson says, a Law of Compensation in Nature. For every sweet hath its bitter; every bitter its sweet. For every excess there is a proportionate defect and for every defect there is a proportionate excess. A Perfect Equity seems to hold the evenly balanced scales of Nature.

### **Unseen Fulness in Visible Part**

Now perhaps we shall be better able to treat the problem of good and evil. The first thing to be noticed is that in all seeming evil there is partial good. "The toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in his head." There is no colour so dark and depressing as the black of the coaltar which conceals yet the elements of the most beautiful and brilliant colours to which our eyes are sensitive. What is sown in weakness is raised in power. Our strength is made perfect in weakness. In a country a calamity brings out the best side of human nature by acting like a broad and powerful fan which, winnowing away the light and integrated parts, brings into a more compact union what has mass or



matter. Evil is absolutely necessary that the good may be known and felt just as darkness is needed that the light may be seen, or silence that the sound may be heard.

What a grand philosophy we have inherited from our Lord Zoroaster! How perfectly it meets every practical want of our daily life! How

restful and how happy we feel when we have once mastered the working of this fundamental principle of the universe and realised the truth that all Nature is but Art unknown to us; all Chance, Direction which we cannot see; all Discord, Harmony not understood; all partial Evil, universal Good!

## PILGRIMAGE TO THE HIMALAYAN TIRTHAS

*By Swami Chidbhavananda*

**S**ITUATED in the interior of the Himalayas, very near two of the important sources of the Ganges, and about two hundred miles from the nearest Railway Station, are Kedarnath and Badrinath which are held in veneration by the Hindus. It is the earnest wish of the pious to go some time or other on a pilgrimage to these sacred spots hidden away from human habitation. Thousands are as such attracted here, year after year from all over India. The charm in this pilgrimage is not so much in the sublime and gigantic mountain scenery as in the method and spirit in which it is undertaken.

### **Equipment for Starting**

All modern comforts and modes of conveyance come to an end at Hrishikesh where the pilgrims usually spend an eventful day. Here the crystal pure Ganges gushes out of the chasm of the Himalayas into the plains on her sanctifying and fertilizing mission. The wayfarers go about visiting temples and holy

men, and above all in selecting a good cooly to carry the luggage—an initial task upon which depends much of the smoothness and comfort of the journey. After achieving this no time is lost. With an iron-spiked long staff in the hand, the Lord's name on the lips and holy and hopeful thoughts in the mind, the pilgrims set out on foot in long files. At Lakshmanjula, which is only three miles from Hrishikesh, the plains are lost sight of, never to be seen again until this stage is reached on the return journey.

### **As in Olden Times**

The pilgrim finds himself rather abruptly in a primitive world cut off from the modern weal and woe. The interior has to be penetrated much in the same way as it was done several thousand years ago. The whole journey is calculated to keep the devotee as far as possible in sight of the sacred river. It is not a matter of one steady ascent while going and descent while returning, as modern engineering would have

it. On the other hand it is full of ups and downs all along. Shelter against one night has to be taken at an icy cold elevation, and perhaps against the following night in a sweltering deep valley. To the critic it may be all ludicrous ; but to the aspirant it is a sort of physical austerity. These visible representations of ups and downs in life, heat and cold, strain and discomfort are all viewed with perfect equanimity.

### **Halt at Chatties**

Clusters of rest-houses are located on the road-side at irregular distances varying from two to five miles in between. Each group of lodgings is called a "Chatty," and like a hamlet it has its permanent name also—Mahadev Chatty, Ram-pur Chatty, Math Chatty and so on. The owner of a lodge in a Chatty is very much like a hotel-keeper with this difference that, while the hotel-keeper cooks for his customers, this man—Dokandar or shop-keeper as he is called—sells his customers all raw materials required for cooking. He also lends the required cooking vessels, and his hospitality and attendance upon the pilgrim is proportional to the purchases made from him.

### **Daily Routine**

From the point of view of daily routine, each succeeding day is a duplicate of the day that has passed. The pilgrims get up early in the morning, tell the beads, sing or chant a little, then bundling their little belongings begin to march. The progress on the way varies accord-

ing to capacity. By ten o'clock they halt at a Chatty, cook, bathe, pray, eat and rest till three in the afternoon. Then begins the evening march until they are held up by dusk at some other resting place. Night camp is the most interesting part of the journey. The reluctant fire is induced by various methods to consume the fuel that was only the other day on the growing tree. Hearths glimmer through clouds of smoke hovering all round. Chappatis are being everywhere slapped between the palms. Others engage themselves variously—singing devotional songs in chorus, praying and meditating, chatting, and in many cases, massaging the weary legs. Now and then a seemingly strong, but way-weary fat man affords much fun and frolic to a witty and humorous party, specially when he falls prostrate on the floor and persuades somebody to stamp on his back in the same way as a potter presses his legs on the clay ! As hours pass the bustle dwindles into silence, only to begin when the pilgrims commence the same routine again on the day following.

### **Sacred Spots and Associations**

Every day is a day of achievement for the pilgrim because he reaches a sanctuary full of traditions. To name a few, Vyasa Ghat, Agastya Muni, Gupta Kasi or hidden Benares have all their association of ideas. The venerable Ganga is always the common factor. There are innumerable tributaries, though all of them go by the name of

Ganga. At the confluence of five of them there are five Prayags, Deva Prayag, Rudra Prayag, Vishnu Prayag, Nanda Prayag and Karna Prayag. While it is meritorious to bathe in all these five, life is at stake at the first three, where the mighty currents boil, fret and foam on rocky beds. Instantaneous death is the result if man dares transgress his limits or take too much liberty with the roaring element. Minor tributaries such as Garuda Ganga and Patala Ganga have also their own sanctity. Tradition has it that there are, in that locality covering an area of a few thousand square miles, five chief abodes of Shiva and five of Vishnu; but easy access can be had only to two of each—Kedarnath and Tunganath among Shiva's abodes and Triyugi Narayan and Badri Narayan among Vishnu's abodes. Places of minor importance are too many to be recounted.

### Charms of Mountain Scenery

The scenery is sublime and awe-inspiring all along. There is a change in the panorama from place to place. Revered Gangaji is now deep, silent, almost stationary and dark green in colour, affording a striking contrast with the snow-white sand bank. Now she is broad, murmurs with activity and assumes light green, yellow, light blue and a variety of other hues. Again, she rolls down the huge smooth rocks in milk-white foam, eternally chanting "Hara Hara Vyom; Hara Hara Vyom." Endless mountain ranges penetrate into the sky, one behind the other. The higher one goes the

higher still they rise up defying all human attempts to reach the top-most. In some places they stand stately, so close to one another that the sun cannot be seen except for a few hours at midday. If the magnificence of nature is to be seen anywhere, it is here.

### Experience of Snowing

The charm culminates in the snow. It was in a typical summer evening that we had arrived at Kedarnath, an imposing little temple amidst a number of rest-houses and Dharmasalas. The locality had already turned verdant and decked with tiny flowers. Removed far behind was the background of perpetual snow walls.

But a sudden and unexpected magical transformation takes place. Snowing which is something unusual in summer takes place all through that night and part of the following day. We wake up, or rather get out of the intensely cold rooms to see an ideal winter morning. It is of course colder still outdoors. Houses are almost buried in snow and there is dazzling whiteness everywhere. We walk on that crisp stuff and have it fall on us profusely. It is said that meditation culminates in dazzling brilliance—the Shiva consciousness. This abode of Shiva affords such an experience even in the mundane material plane. Mind merges itself in bliss into this boundless brilliance. The intensely biting cold is entirely forgotten. Verily it is all Shiva Chaitanya here. The temple and the Swayambhu Lingam within, inspiring though

they are, may be easily dispensed with !

### **Charm of Badrinath**

While Kedarnath transports man into the consciousness of God above all attributes, Badrinath inspires him equally with all His divine attributes. Sri Narayana abides here in all splendour and glory. Lakshmi, the embodiment of beauty and plenty, is paying homage to Him. Kubera attends upon Him. Devotees like Narada and Uddhava find supreme bliss in His presence. Above all, near Him are seated the sages Narayana and Nara, also known as Krishna and Arjuna, the human representation of Paramatma and Jivatma, merged in deep meditation. The Paramatma is eternally drawing and attracting the Jivatma towards Himself; and the latter, through all weal and woe of the mundane life, is carving his way towards the former. Can the goal of life be symbolised in a better way ?

### **Through the Dim Past to the Present**

Historians have not been able to trace the origin of these two places of pilgrimage. Tradition, however, has it that they have been there for ages. Many Rishis had their hermitages here. Sri Rama and subsequently the Pandavas had been here. Sankaracharya, it is said, not only visited these places, but also made them more popular than they were before. He established a Math at Badrinath, and, it is believed, met his last days at Kedarnath. At his

instance there are, to this day, qualified and competent men from far-off South India in charge of these two Tirthas. This innovation, if we may so call it, is actuated by no other motive than the religious unity of India.

The temples remain open only for half the year, it being impossible to have access there during the winter. This dire and inevitable situation is explained away in a nice sentiment that during that period the Devas are left undisturbed by the mortals in their worship of the Supreme.

### **Remarkable Variety**

Be that as it may, the temples are frequented by thousands of pilgrims in summer. All India is well represented then. Varieties in costumes peculiar to different provinces are too evident even for a casual observer. One can easily distinguish by garment and mannerism the Madrasi from the Guzerati, the Bengali from the Hindustani, the Punjabi from the Sindi. Then too there is no such thing as a common Indian diet. Each province has its own style, and it may not be too much to say that even in a province each group or family has its own tastes. This being the case the question of running hotels on the way for the benefit of the pilgrims does not arise at all. Caste scruples have here neither poignancy nor bitterness, whatever may be the case on the plains. Each adheres to his own mode of life without interfering or causing disturbance to his fellow-pilgrims.

The variety displayed in language is much more than that in dress and diet. Those who fail to find a common medium easily, and cordially too, manage shopping and such like transactions through that instinctive and unlettered language—signs, gestures and postures. At Kedar and Badri there is a spontaneous and informal congress of Indian languages, in which Hindi as a matter of course assumes the presidential chair. English is treated by some as a distinguished visitor while by others as an intruder. That the regard for Sanskrit is universal needs no mention. When it comes to a prayer in Sanskrit, or the recitation of the Gita or the Upanishads, the whole of India vibrates with onelife-current. Night after night, just after vespers this is borne testimony to in the holy presence of Sri Narayana at Badri.

All stages and phases of human life present here a commingled spectacle. There is the babe in the mother's bosom, the child that can just walk, the youth, the adult, the old and the cripple tottering on the staff. There is, again, the Brahmachari, the Grihastha, the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasin. In this long march, one devotee sanctifies every step he takes with the name of the Lord. Another tells his beads ceaselessly all along the otherwise weary way. A bard refuses to move an inch on the road without singing the glory of the great Creator. Thus goes on the great pilgrimage day in and day out.

### The Danger Aspect

And it is not without its dangers and difficulties. Year after year pilgrims in big numbers have been swept down by avalanches into bottomless gorges. Still they have no other alternative but to walk on huge lumps of snow rapidly thawing. Every now and then the roaring and seething Ganga has to be crossed on swinging bridges, which had on many an occasion before given way, abandoning the mortals to the heedless torrents below. While crossing some of these bridges, life literally hangs suspended to a rope. Huge landslips have buried people alive. One sees pebbles and sand constantly slipping and rolling down. Big stones are waiting for their turn. A massive rock and enormous volume of earth threaten to descend with an uproar. The path here is not worth the name; and no public body or private individual can help it under the circumstances. If the pilgrim slips a little, he is gone for ever into the nether world. Equally so is the case if a stone from the dizzy height descends on him. "Only the other day such and such a calamity has happened," is the warning given on the spot. The devotee does not on this account abandon his pious wish. He resigns himself to the Will of the Lord, and in His name he walks, crawls and creeps. It is a faith-inspiring sight to see, specially in the case of the old and the infirm! One pauses to think that practicality is after all a relative term.

### Value of Complete Pilgrimage

It is only when the Chatur Dhama or four holy abodes in the cardinal points of India are visited that the pilgrimage becomes complete. These are Rameswaram in the southernmost shore, Puri on the east coast, Dwaraka in the west and Badrinath on the insurmountable northern walls. In visiting them a beautifully blended practical course in geography, history, sociology and religion is obtained. As a mark of having paid homage at the Dhamas on the plains some pilgrims may be seen carrying small bundles of canes

to the fourth Tirtha. This concluding part of the pilgrimage more than anything else has a telling effect upon the mind. Devotion, dependence upon God, love and sympathy for fellowmen and such like virtues develop naturally. Above all, that in the midst of worldly varieties, Godhead is the goal for which India lives and breathes, becomes distinctly evident here. Wonderful were the people who conceived the ideas of this pilgrimage, and equally wonderful is the race that lives up to it.

## GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AND LOVE

By K. Natesa Ayyar, M. A.

**T**HE allegation of *Maya Vadam* or *Mithya Vadam* is sometimes made against the *Sankaraite* or the *Goulapadic* account of the creation, sustenance, and absorption of all this *Cosmos* of sentient and rational. For the machinery provided here to meet the contradictions and the antinomies incidental to all purely 'intellectual' modes of viewing life and will, feeling and joy, personality and individuality, purpose and achievement, struggle and development, aspiration and fulfilment—is, it appears to certain types of souls, inadequate and unsatisfying.

### Reply to Charge of Mithya Vadam

The answer that is usually given to such charges by this school is *fourfold*:

*1st*—That they follow the Vedic texts closely and do not propose to frame a system out of the resources of their own brain—all that they attempt being to give *as far as possible* a basis of reason and consistency and harmony and unity to the correct, *i.e.*, the really fruitful interpretation of these texts: *i.e.*, so as to lead to Moksha.

*2nd*—That they are supported herein by a long line of traditional Gurus (*Sampradaya Vith-s*) who have *unquestionably* attained the blessedness and peace of the Highest that is attainable to man.

*3rd*—That they keep close to *facts* of experience; facts such as

individual responsibility, moral freedom, Karma, the indefiniteness of the beginning of the Karma-bandha, the endability of it by human effort aided by the illumination of the grace of the Guru—the Guru in the Human Form outside the body *as well as* in the body and heart of the aspirant.

6th—That in their attempt to co-ordinate and accommodate these indisputable facts in an organised whole in conformity to the several texts of the Veda, they make the minimum demand upon credulity, that is, they make it all credible and consistent so as to lead to healthy, hopeful and resolute effort and unflinching fruition in bliss and peace.

### Need for Unity

Though similar claims may be made by the other schools of theory and interpretation, they begin by repudiating *Unity* to give up, which is to give up the problem altogether. For all problems of philosophic accounting and metaphysical and religious harmonisation rest upon the unification of all scattered and diverse fragments of experience into a Focussed Centre of undimmed Luminousness and Joy: undimmed Glory and Blessedness.

We have to achieve Advaita in 'feel.' As a preliminary, an Advaita in Reason—the Reason 'speculative' and the Reason 'Practical'—

has to be achieved. Therefore is Advaitism our goal and endeavour, as indeed *must* be the goal and endeavour of all aspirers after the Highest.

### Ramanuja's Inclusion of Love

The Ramanuja School say they provide this Advaitic basis without sacrificing or belittling or attenuating the importance and reality of 'Love' as an integral element of all bliss-seeking, and all bliss-enjoying, experience; that is, both in the *Leela Vibhoothi* and *Nitya Vibhoothi*—(the *prakrithic* world of Samsara and the *aprakrithic* world of liberated souls):—both being en-souled by the *Divine*, the *Brahmic* Consciousness or Spirit.

Ramanuja says in effect:—

The 'otherness' of others is no mere illusory projection of the Self, due to ignorance and perverted nescience, (अविद्या and भ्रंति)—which should be destroyed or sublated, by right knowledge or *Samyak-darśana*, but an *essential, integral, real* mode of the Self by which the Love-element of the Bliss of that Self—that is, the radiative aspect of the Focussed Rapture of the Self—is both exercised and fulfilled in the Vaikunta-Loka and the Marthya-Loka alike; (*i. e.*, the world of 'Ideal Reality' and the world of 'Actual Reality'.)

"The Universe of Souls is indeed My Counterpart," says the Lord, and with the Lord, the Enlightened One also. For is not the Mukta—the Illumined, Blessed, Blissful One in the Lord and of Him? And

indeed, identified with Him in Joy and Love alike? In Rapture and Benediction alike?

### Cosmos of Souls

Joy is no lonely rapture; it is Benediction also. Bliss is no solitary feel: it is Love also or Prema. Love is but Joy in Dispensation and Diffusion—spontaneous and effortless. Benediction is but "Radiation" of Rapture—a radiation taking place by sheer presence. Knowledge—and Beauty with it—is the Radiance, the shining forth, of the Light that "I AM" to others akin to Me: to other "I Am's." Thus the Final Reality is of the nature of a *Social Whole*, a *Divine Order*, a *Cosmos of*

*Souls*, a *Kingdom of God*, indeed. This is called Vaikunta, Vishnu-pada, in all the Scriptures—Veda or Smriti or Purana or Itihasa or Utthama Kavyas: This *Order*, it should be remembered, embraces both the Eternal and the Temporal alike, the Muktas and the Baddhas, the Enlightened and the yet unenlightened; the Siddhas and the as yet Asiddhas.

God is the Cosmic Consciousness. It is full of joy, of creativity of values, of Joy-radiance and Joy-radiation called in human language Love. All matter, all nature is subservient to its purposes and creativities.

## RELIGION AND ART OF THE VILLAGE

*By A. Swaminatha Iyer, B.A.*

### Religion in Daily Activities

AS long as man has the supreme necessity to feed himself, so long will the production of food be the main occupation of the country side, and of the many thousands of villages in which the producers live. In the task of producing the food and the carrying out of the various processes much hard labour will have to be spent, which is the normal life of the villager. To lighten his labour he often bursts out into song. There is an innate religious and artistic sense in man; and however crude their expression may be, their value in daily life is none the less real. For instance,

in the act of lifting water for irrigation, or pounding the grain for consumption we find that the villager relieves himself of the tedium by reciting in ballads the exploits of the heroes of the Mahabharata and the doings of the national heroes. The first idea of an Overlord who has to be appealed to comes to him when the crop is threatened with ruin by continued drought; and we find the toiling villager praying to the unseen God to bless him with a downpour of rain. Here we have the beginnings of a crude religion. Most of the daily routine activities of the village folk, eating, drinking, ploughing, sowing, harvesting, digg-



ing are ordinarily preceded or followed by a prayer, invocation of the deities and libations.

### **Among Others as among Hindus**

This close connection between religion and usual daily activities of the rural village is in direct contrast with what we find in urban life. We often find that a portion of the family dwelling house is a temple or sanctuary, devoted to the worship of the deities, and the agriculturists participate in all religious functions.

This is especially the case in Chinese dwellings. In a special ancestral hall or other place are kept the religious scrolls and the ancestral tablets. In China there are also ancestral temples belonging to groups of families. As in India, the daily life and religion of the rural Chinese are closely interwoven. Their temples are not only places of worship, but are also meeting places for the community.

The organisation of the national Japanese religion, Shinto, is very similar. In a corner of one of the rooms, usually the living room of the house, is a shelf in which stand tablets or scraps of paper inscribed with the gods venerated by them, and the tutelary god of the owners' calling. The daily routine is simple, consisting of an offering of food and drink in the morning and evening.

So also was religious organisation of ancient Israel in its nomadic and early agricultural stage, of ancient Egypt, and is to some extent, of contemporary Egypt also. We find similar elements in the religion of

the followers of Zoroaster in ancient Persia.

The entire domestic life of the Hindu is interwoven with religion from the naming of the child at birth to the cremation of the dead body. Similarly in such ordinary daily duties as the cleansing of teeth and the morning bath, to the last waking moment, there are innumerable religious observances. In almost every tolerably big Hindu house in a village there used to be a shrine where inmates or their representatives performed religious worship. Worship in community temples and similar places, which we notice in later times, has been at the cost of worship in the dwelling house and the family hall.

### **Agricultural Character of Deities**

What are the principal deities worshipped by the rural peoples? Among the Chinese, the principal deities are personified objects which were accorded religious reverence, such as the Father of husbandry and the Spirit of earth and heaven, both of which show clearly their agricultural connections. Many of the venerated spirits have an agricultural character and animals, trees, corn and fruits are often venerated. The pre-Christian pagan system of beliefs of European countries was saturated with deities, spirits and agencies of an agricultural character. Many Christian holidays with which we are familiar, for example, St. George's day or St. Nicholas' day, are but slightly

disguised agricultural holidays and several Christian saints have been turned into protectors of crops or cattle, the givers of rain and defenders against droughts. We find that in the early Hindu system are included several deities with definite agricultural character, Pushan, for instance, who drives a cart drawn by goats and is a protector of the cattle. Other deities are the gods of the sky, of the rain and other important natural phenomena.

### Special Ceremonies

In the ritual of Hindu religion there are special rites and invocations to be used before, during and after ploughing, sowing, harvesting and threshing: ceremonies for the offering of the first fruits to the gods and for the making of harvest offering—a thanks-giving offering—for removing weeds from the fields, eliminating insects, putting corn into a barn etc. There are also prayers and rites to bring rain or stop a storm that is devastating the fields. In fact, any operation connected with agriculture is accompanied by a defined, prescribed religious rite, sacrifice or prayer; and these constitute the chief religious observances of the village, which are specialised for each occasion.

During ancient and medieval times, we are told, before ploughing the field for putting seed, a mess of beneficial food (*Payasam* with jaggery) was offered to Indra, Maruts and other deities. This custom does not obtain now, but we have in its place the "Ponneru,"

the first ploughing after the commencement of the new year rains. An auspicious day is selected for it and the ploughing is done by the biggest man of the village who is also the richest and the luckiest there, after offering to the gods plantain fruits, flowers, cocoanuts, fried grain and *pan supari*. After the cultivation is over and before the harvest, it is usual to offer to the field deities and the plough cattle a specially prepared sacrificial food dedicated to Surya during the Makara-Sankranti. This is both a thanks-giving offering and a prayer for the next agricultural season.

### Special for Rain

There are also other religious ceremonies which the villagers observe to avoid drought and to bring down rain. The Virata Parva of the Mahabharata is read daily in the village temple for a period of ten to forty days as a mass-movement in the village. In some villages of the Tamil district, an effigy, apparently the representation of a monster, (*Kodum Pavi*) the great sinner who is holding up the rains, is taken round the village. Such effigies are dragged through the streets with mourners beating their breasts, accompanying. The belief is ingrained in the village people that drought is one of God's punishments for the sins of man, and the ceremony symbolises the death of great sinners. A world thus relieved of them will, it is believed, be blessed with rain.

An orthodox custom which largely obtains in villages where there

are Shiva temples, is to perform what is called Annabhishekam. This consists in covering the Sacred Symbol with cooked rice to the accompaniment of Vedic Mantras. Sahasra-Ghatabhishekam and Dharabhishekam are also performed at Shiva shrines for averting droughts. The more learned among the orthodox people, especially those versed in Vedic lore, have recourse to invocations to Parjanya, which have to be continued for a number of days, the minimum being ten days. The Vaidiks engaged in the invocations are expected to be well versed in the Parjanya Suktas and the Kareri Mantras. They are to chant the Mantras standing knee-deep in water, turning their faces upward in an attitude of supplication. During the period of invocation they are required to observe special diet (Sattvic food).

Among the Buddhists of Ceylon, whenever there is severe drought, a prayer campaign is started by the priests. If this is not successful, the Sacred Tooth is exposed. It is believed that if this is done rain almost immediately falls.

### **For Successful Cultivation in General**

Among the Chinese, such ceremonies have not only comprised the main part of their religious observances, but have even become a public duty of the Government itself, which, led by the Emperor, has had to perform a series of agricultural rites definitely prescribed. Some of these great ceremonies are

the worship of Hauki, the father of husbandry, the spring agricultural festival, the thanks-giving sacrifices for a plentiful year, the agricultural sacrifices at the end of the year and the sacrifice to heaven, earth, the spirits of land and grain, and the god of the field. Every agricultural activity is preceded or followed by a magic religious rite, sacrifice or prayer. There are also common forms of prayer in regard to matters in which the agricultural community as a whole is interested. We read of such common prayers as the following: "Give us rain, give us sunshine, may this crop be abundant!"

Many religious rites of the Greek and Roman agriculturists are very similar. Let us note, for instance, the following prayer: "And pray thou to Zeus, the lord of earth, and unto Pur Demeter that the holy grain of December be full and heavy." Similar evidences of the performance of religious rites in connection with agricultural operations are noticeable in the Zoroastrian rural customs. It is natural to expect that with the development of civilisation, and particularly machine-civilisation, these rural traits would tend to fade and become less and less recognisable.

### **Art and Recreation**

No people known to us spend all their time and energy merely in the production of food and securing for themselves shelter from sun and rain. Even the poorest tribes have produced work that gave them pleasure; and those who were

favoured with nature's bounties had greater freedom from care to devote their spare time and energy to the creation of works of beauty. The village arts were not sharply differentiated from religious or intellectual pursuits. The artistic and recreational functions were performed for the most part by the people themselves. The members of the village community were active rather than passive participants in them. They were both the actors and the audience. Professional artists were relatively rare, though migratory story-tellers, actors and singers would occasionally visit the rural community, especially after the harvests.

Most of the artistic and recreational activities were performed by and for the family circle, with connected religious ceremonies. Compare, for example, the Navaratri festivities which are connected with the worship of the Shakti aspect of God in its three-fold aspects of Power, Prosperity and Wisdom, represented by the three aspects of the Universal Mother, Jagannata, as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati respectively. This festival of Navaratri or Dusserah as it is known in some parts of

India, is a socio-religious festival in which the women of the household mainly take part. In many places, girls of tender age are regularly worshipped as representing the Kumari aspect of the Mother. Along with the worship of Devi, the occasion is utilised for family exhibitions of arts and crafts. These, which represent the artistic work of the members of the family during the year, are dedicated as a thanksgiving offering to Devi Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom.

Births, marriages and so on of members of the family were the main subjects of rural art. The instruments and means with which the agricultural people performed their aesthetic functions were predominantly home-made. Rival aesthetic and recreational activities were not therefore commercialised but performed mainly to give enjoyment to the parties concerned and their families. The arts were practised and enjoyed by the people themselves and not for the profits they bring. They were performed spontaneously and without any special staging. Such collective activities of the villagers were usually followed by singing, dancing, story-telling, joke-making or other forms of recreation.

---

## GLIMPSES OF KRISHNA

By S. N. Suta

### Suitable Form

Krishna has been the object of veneration of countless generations of devotees. The stories of his boyhood have enabled aspirants of a mystical type to capture the mood which leads to the exquisite bliss of union with the Highest. Krishna was an artist in a special sense. Himself with his blue colour and yellow silk, and his brother Rama with his white complexion and blue silk, both wearing garlands and emitting the fragrance of sandal paste, cheerful and sprightly and tending their herds,—have ever supplied agreeable “forms” for the meditation of millions desiring freedom in this world as well as in the next.

### Catching His Melody

The song of life Krishna played on his flute charmed the hearts of all his hearers and lifted them gently from the worst consequences of earthly existence. That song has become to many a devotee the symbol of the noblest aspirations of the human mind. And it is in this light only that those who yearn after self-purification view the stories of Baby Krishna's wonderful deeds. They utilise these scenes of Krishna's boyish exploits for training their power of concentration and for raising up an emotion which can

catch the melody he sang for all time in the charming woodlands of Brindavan. A self-controlled person acts exactly as he thinks. Hence, if he can listen to Krishna's divine song of evolution by stringing his nerves to its loftier pitch, he is bound to be a centre of vigorous and loving action for the welfare of all. This “freedom” in action may co-exist with a limitation imposed by the special qualifications of his mind, inherited and acquired. A person with teaching capacity, for example, may be able only to teach even after he lifts himself to this level of inner rhythm and sweetness. He may not manifest military talents if he had been a stranger to such training in his earlier years. Whatever be the qualities of the individual, consistent with virtue, they will all be *unreservedly* allowed “free” play in the world of forces. This is the maximum that one is entitled to expect as a result of any psychological transformation effected through religion. सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

The activities of Krishna both as a boy and as a “King-maker” have been very often badly criticised. There is nothing strange in this; for we find, from the Bhagavatam itself, that Parikshit, the royal devotee, had his own doubts regarding the conduct of Krishna.

Said he to Sri Suka, "The Lord of Yadus, O sage, is the teacher of what constitutes Dharma. He is to set the example and He is its defender. How then did He choose to act in the contrary way in His dealings with the ladies of Vraja?"<sup>1</sup> Sri Suka's reply, based partly upon the Yogic powers of "Isvaras," satisfied Parikshit, but cannot be expected to satisfy the modern mind. We shall pass on, therefore, to another aspect or two of Krishna's life, from which we may draw some lessons for our daily life.

### Secret of Power and Efficiency

It is told that Narada felt curious to see how Krishna was managing his rather unwieldy household and so he visited each of his mansions separately in due order. We have only to add together the various scenes that Narada saw at various times of the day in the various houses, to perceive the secret of Krishna's strength, wisdom and popularity. He was no doubt seen performing marriage and other rites in due time for his sons and daughters, or engaged in giving a send-off to some of his children or a reception to those that returned. But more often he was seen conferring with Uddhava and other ministers; deciding on war or on peace; or going about *incognito* among his own ministers, harem or

other places for noting the inward feelings of the various elements over whom he ruled. He was also seen undergoing exercises with the sword and shield and visiting the ways travelled by his pupils.<sup>2</sup> It is no wonder that under the leadership of such a warrior the Yadavas continued to remain a power whose friendship was to be courted or whose enmity was to be avoided. Their destruction came only when even Balarama and other Vrishni heroes went on drinking against the special instructions and even in the presence of Krishna himself.<sup>3</sup> These are lessons valuable for all time; and these too form part of the song of life that Krishna sang. It was not of course the soft strains of his earlier years. It was his mid-day tune.

### Daily Spiritual Exercises

Narada also saw him engaged in worshipping all the gods, his own Amsas or aspects, with well arranged sacrifices. Sometimes he paid homage to the All-pervading Lord with the five kinds of daily sacrifices, following them up with feeding enlightened ones and partaking of what was left. He made gifts of cows to the learned; and

<sup>1</sup> स कथं धर्ममेतूनां वक्ता कर्ताभिर्गता ।

प्रतीपमाचरद् ब्रह्मन् । परदारगभिमर्शनम् ? ॥

(Bhagavatam x, ch. 33, verse 28)

<sup>2</sup> पुत्राणां दुहितृणाञ्च क. ५ विध्युपयापनम् । 32.

प्रस्थापनोपानयनैरपत्यानां महोत्सवान् । 33.

<sup>3</sup> मन्त्रयन्त्रश्च करिंश्चिन्मन्त्रिभिश्चोद्भवादिभिः 27.

कुर्वन्तं विग्रहं कैश्चित्सन्धिश्चान्यत्र (कोशवम्) 31.

अव्यक्तलिङ्गं प्रकृतिष्वन्तःपुरगृहादिषु ।

कच्चिचरन्तं योगेशं तत्तद्भाववृत्तुत्सया ॥ 36.

एकत्र चासिचर्मभ्यां चान्तमसिचर्मसु ॥ 25.

<sup>4</sup> कृष्णस्य सन्निधौ रामः सहितः कृतवर्मणा ।

अपियद्युद्युधानश्च गदो बभूवस्तथैव च ॥

(Mausala Parva iii, 16.)

for the welfare of the public at large established Dharma in the shape of wells, groves, rest-houses, plantations and the like.<sup>5</sup> Towards his preceptors he ever showed reverence; and he gave a practical turn to it by continuing the morning and evening prayers and silently contemplating the Gayatri, as taught by them. To the exposition of Itihasas and Puranas he gave a respectful ear, although he could at will withdraw his mind from all forms and names and sit absorbed in contemplating the Perfect Person (Himself) transcending the Forces of Nature.

It was while he was thus seated alone that Yudhishtira once hurriedly went into his room and began talking to him, but was surprised to see no response coming as on other days. Said the king gazing at the motionless body of his Master, "How wonderful is this, O Thou of immeasurable prowess, that Thou art wrapt in meditation! O Refuge of the universe, is it all right with the three worlds? When Thou hast withdrawn Thyself and adopted the fourth state (of deep contemplation) my mind has been filled with wonder!" Krishna's limbs slowly moved; he opened his eyes and "replacing" the understanding and the senses in their usual sphere, told about his desire to show his grace to Bhishma lying on his bed of

arrows, like a fire about to go out.<sup>6</sup> They all went to see the dying hero; and we have the Shanti Parva as its result.

And yet this was the Krishna who had nothing to gain or nothing to lose. He chose to follow the traditional methods, to continue to serve the preceptors, elders, the sacred fire and the deities and to keep up the practice of meditation; for this is the only way in which great men's minds can act. Although they personally may not have anything to gain from such practice, they perform them with the force of their illumination so that others, not so well advanced, can feel assured and struggle for higher flights. The really illumined never feel "troubled" or "humiliated" by following the methods which helped them to rise. They do not feel the need to kick off the ladder by which they climbed, as if its retention would indicate an inferiority on their part. The original flights of Krishna's music had as their basic note all the injunctions laid down by the teachers of old. Would this was our principle too!

6 किमिदं परमाथर्थं ध्यायस्यामितविक्रम ।

कच्चिन्नोक्तत्रयस्यास्य स्वस्ति लोकपरायण ? ॥

चतुर्थे ध्यानमार्गन्त्वमालम्ब्य पुरुषर्षभ ।

अप्रकान्तो यतो देवस्तेन मे विस्मितं मनः ॥

(Shanti Parva, ch. 46, verses 1 and 2)

ततः स्वं गोचरे न्यस्य मनोबुद्धीन्द्रियाणि सः ।

स्मितपूर्वमुवाचेदं भगवान् वासवानुजः ॥ 10.

शरतल्पगतो भीष्मः शाम्यन्निव हुताशनः ।

मान्ध्याति पुरुषव्याधस्ततो मे तद्रतं मनः ॥ 11.

<sup>5</sup> यजन्तं स (स्व)कलान् देवान् कापि क्रतुभिरुर्जितः ।  
पूतयन्तं कचिद्धर्मं कूपाराममठादिभिः ॥ 84.

For the other items in this para refer to other lines of verses 24 to 30 of ch. 69, Skandha X of Srimad Bhagavatam.

### Pilgrimage on Day of Eclipse

On a certain day there was a solar eclipse. All good people went on pilgrimage to the holy place of Syamanta Panchaka in order to secure religious merit.<sup>7</sup> Krishna also, followed by his numerous queens, sons, friends and troops went thither.

### Desire for Service Uppermost

After the preliminary exchange of greetings was over, Draupadi met Krishna's queens and elicited from them what attitude each of them maintained towards him. Said she to them: "O queens, all constant with Krishna, please tell me how the glorious Lord, of Himself, married you, behaving through His Maya like an ordinary mortal."<sup>8</sup>

The replies are interesting for many reasons. It is all only a confidential talk not supposed to act as a praise of their husband and to reach his ears as such. Although they certainly loved him as their husband, that aspect was never uppermost in the mind of any of them. They knew his greatness and their only desire was to serve him in any capacity that was vouchsafed to them. There is not the least tinge of worldliness in the outlook of any of them. What a comforting assurance to those who lead a

household life to see these glorious examples of women leading a divinely married life! And what a wonderful model of a husband too, —a husband who could come out of the searching scrutiny of womens' eyes and always impress them with the spiritual heights in which his mind soared while the daily round of activities went on without a break!

Said Bhadra, "May I have in every life (She did not care for ending rebirth) the duty of washing the feet of the Lord, the abode of Prosperity, who came to my self-choice (Swayamvara), vanquished the kings and my brothers who offered resistance and carried me off, just as the lion carries off his share from the midst of hounds!"<sup>9</sup>

Satya said, "For testing the strength of the kings, my father had secured seven oxen which, endowed with inordinate strength and very sharp horns, put down the pride of warriors. The Lord at once took hold of them and yoked them playfully, just as children may deal with lambs. May it be my fortune to do service to Him!"<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> सूर्योपरागः सुमहानासीत् कलपक्षये यया ।

ते ज्ञात्वा मनुजा राजन् पुरस्तादेव सर्वतः ।

स्यमन्तपञ्चकं क्षेत्रं ययुः श्रेयोविधित्तया ॥

(Sk. X, ch. 82, verses 1 and 2)

<sup>8</sup> हे कृष्णपत्न्य एतन्नो ब्रूत वो भगवान् स्वयं ।

उपयेमे यथालोकमनुकुर्वन् स्वमायया ॥ 7.

<sup>9</sup> यो मां स्वयंवर उपेत्य विजित्य भूषा-  
न्नित्यं श्वशुरगमिवात्मवलिं द्विपारिः ।  
भ्रातृश्च मेऽपकुरुतः स्वपुरं त्रियौक-  
स्तस्यास्तु मेऽनुभवमङ्गुथवनेजनत्वम् ॥ 12.

<sup>10</sup> सप्तोच्चणोऽतिचलवीर्यसुतीक्ष्णगृहान्  
पिला कृतान् चित्तिपंवीर्यपरीक्षणाय ।  
तान् वीरदुर्मदहनस्तरसा निगृह्य  
क्रीडन् ववंध ह यया शिशवोऽजतोक्ताम् ॥ 13.  
.....तद्वास्यमस्तु मे ॥ 14.



Kalindi said, "He knew me performing Tapas with the desire of touching His feet. He approached through His friend and took my hand. *I am the sweeper of His house.*"<sup>11</sup> A congenial task, no doubt, for the noble river that she was!

Jambavati said with an appealing touch, "Not able to recognise Him as Sitapati, his own Deity, my father fought with Him for twenty-seven days. After undergoing the trial, he recognised Him, took hold of His hand and offered me as a present together with the jewel, Syamantaka. *And I am His servant.*"<sup>12</sup>

Lakshmanā had a long story to tell of the way in which Krishna hit a target by 'looking' at its reflection in a pool at mid-day, when other warriors had failed in the earlier hours of the morning. After describing how she herself entered the wedding-hall and chose him and he showed his prowess in the fight that ensued, she expressed her feelings towards him thus: "*These we are servants indeed in His household, servants of Him who finds delight in Himself.*"

<sup>11</sup> तपश्चरन्तीमाज्ञाय रत्नपादस्पर्शनाशया ।

सर्वव्योषेत्याह्नीत् पार्तिं योऽहं तद्गृहमार्जनी ॥ ११.

<sup>12</sup> प्राज्ञाय देहकृदमुं निजनाथदेवं  
सीतावर्तिं त्रिनवहान्यमुनाऽभ्ययुधत् ।

ज्ञात्वा परीक्षित उपहारदर्शयं मां  
पादौ प्रणम्य मणिनाऽहममुष्य दासी ॥ १०.

Certainly by renouncing attachment to everything else and by Tapas we should become more deserving of Him. (Indeed we have got him by these means only.)"<sup>13</sup>

The queens (originally liberated by him from captivity) together said: "He, the Lord of perfect bliss, married us who were contemplating His lotus feet that liberate people from Samsara. We do not, O chaste one, long for imperial grandeur in this world or in the heavenly world or the enjoyments of them both, or for the position of Virat or Parameshtin or the eternal abode of Hari. But we long to bear on our head the glorious dust on His feet, perfumed with the saffron on the bosom of the Goddess of Prosperity."<sup>14</sup>

Seeing Krishna's grandeur and spiritual eminence only, these ladies quite naturally became the mothers of heroes who kept up the military glories of their land as long as they lived. This also forms a charming combination of notes entering into Krishna's mid-day tune. Would we could hear it more audibly now!

<sup>13</sup> आत्मभागमस्य तस्येमा वयं वै गृहदासिकाः ।  
सर्वसङ्गनिवृत्त्याऽद्धा तपरा च बभूविम ॥ ३९.

<sup>14</sup> निर्मुच्य संसृतिविमोक्षमनुस्मरन्तीः ।  
पादाम्बुजं परिणिनाय य आसक्तकामः ॥ ४०.  
न वयं सावि सान्नाज्यं स्वाराज्यं भोज्यमप्युत ।  
वैराज्यं पारमेष्ठ्यञ्च आनन्त्यं वा हरेः पदम् ॥  
कामयामह एतस्य श्रीमत्पादरजः श्रियः ।  
कुचकुङ्कुमगन्धाद्यं मूर्ध्ना वोढुं गदाभृतः ॥ ४१-४२.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Desire to Spread Buddhistic Knowledge**

"The Young East" announces the formation of the International Buddhist Society in Tokyo. Several Buddhists in Japan were earnestly hoping to establish a suitable institution to preach the Dharma, that has taken a new orientation in the Land of the Rising Sun. According to one writer, Japan is the only place where Buddhism is flourishing as religion and philosophy. In the 6th century A. D., Mahayana Buddhism was introduced into Japan from Korea and China. This form contained within it the features of the Hinayana Buddhism of Simhala and Suvana Bhumi and the Mahayana Buddhism of Tibet and China. The result is that the Indian and Chinese Buddhism is found in wonderful completeness in Japan, and Prof. Bruno Petzold declares that no other country than Japan is in such an excellent position to communicate to the world a systematic knowledge of Buddhism. In Japan are garnered the holy treasures of Buddhistic tradition and scholarship and these have been "fructified by modern methods of European science; and in the Universities and Colleges, in the monasteries and temples of Japan a brisk life is to be met, which wants to make known Buddhistic knowledge and science to the outside world, beyond the narrow national confines."

### **Future in the light of the Past**

In the land of its birth and in China, history has recorded in unmistakable language what Buddhism has achieved in moulding their institutions and cultures. No less effectual was the force of Buddhism in that land of colour, courtesy and charm. In every department of Japanese life, "whether in the sphere of religion or philosophy, art or literature, music or dancing, or even in such minor art as the arrangement of flowers, or even in the manly art and exercise of Kendo (fencing) or in archery and in the more practical side of life, the spirit which inspired the administration and legal institutions,—all these were none other than Buddha Dharma." The great secret of her success lies in her capacity to assimilate, amounting to genius. Japan was literally bathed in the sublimated activity of this dynamic force and this enabled Japan to cope with any new situation.

It has been the general impression of many that Japan has been slavishly imitating the West and as against this view that Japan is westernising cent per cent, the I. B. S. informs us in very significant words that the meaning of life to a Japanese is quite different from that of the Western view and expects that the age-long culture of this artistic nation, in the serene

calmness and peaceful atmosphere of Buddhism, will usher in a new epoch of international peace and good will.

It is interesting to know what aspect of Buddhism is influencing life in modern Japan. Is it its religion, ethics or philosophy? Prof. Takakusu, in discussing it, says that religion and philosophy,—the apparently irreconcilables, are really identical in their essentials. To him philosophy is speculative idealism and religion is actualising realism. Life comprehends these two components into one integral whole. Buddhism is that science of Actuality, according to Dr. Paul Dalke. In this comprehension of the actual, idealism and realism lose their shades and we deal with Life. Buddhism among the Japanese has changed their whole outlook on life.

### Estimate of Indian Influence

Prof. Takakusu admits that this Buddhism of Japan owes its origin to Indian philosophy. Continuing he speaks of the division of Indian philosophy into two sections, Brahminism and Buddhism; and says that Brahminism is fundamentally based in realism while Buddhism is idealism. We beg to differ from the learned professor. Unfortunately he has taken the social side of Brahminism and the metaphysical import of Buddhism. Every system that has influenced the life of mankind either as a natural religion or a revealed one, has in it the mythical, theological, mystical and the philo-

sophical. Considering the social side of Brahminism and contrasting it with Buddhistic philosophy, the learned doctor, touching, as every missionary has done, on some evils of Indian Society,—“The utter distinction of classes, the upper strata of society being Aryan conquerors and the fourth the conquered and the slave class”—says that Brahminism is incapable of becoming a universal religion. He says Buddhism alone can claim that. Does he mean by universal religion a philosophy that comprehends the totality of life, scientific in its outlook, that would, irrespective of private opinions and intuitions, probe into the mysteries of life and satisfy a well-guided, universal and critical research into the realm of Reality?

### On a Par

All religions are only *Matams*; but all religions lead to the one Religion, which stands for the Highest Truth. The word religion as commonly understood, loses all significance. The *Matam* of a person is the individual's reaction to his environment under the charge of a conscientious belief or faith. But Tattva, Truth, the *terra incognita* of the true Religion, is beyond all brain-wave-understanding, as that alone is *Satyasya Satyam*. In this state where there is no ego to react, religion becomes Realisation; and that Religion has a capital “R” to emphasise that it does not stand for any “conceptual understanding” of life. From this position Brahminism—we

would rather call it Vedantism—and Buddhism are on a par, governed by the same law of thought. Our position is abundantly made clear in an editorial in V. K. we published in May—June 1933 on the "Misunderstood Vedantin." The metaphysics of Buddhism and Vedantism are identically the same.

### Diagnosis of Western Extremism

In the same magazine Dr. Petzold discusses the message of Buddhism to the world at large. Western life, he characterises as *extremism* which expresses itself in a twofold manner as communism and nationalism. The unrestrained and ill-disciplined voice of the mass, he says, finds expression in the fanaticism of the modern Dictator. To them religion is superannuated. Ruled by *extremism*, the West arrogantly thinks its to be "the only and total order of human life." And if religion is permitted to stay, it must slavishly serve the State to find its own selfish ends. Only in Italy, through longer experience, a kind of compromise is effected between the ambitions of the State and the aspirations of the Church. In Germany and Russia *extremism*, we are told, has pushed to the background all other values of life except that which appeals to the Dictator. Dr. Petzold remarks: "But woe to the country in which extremism has become the universal principle and is covering up the very sources of life; in which ignorance and dilettantism, hysteria and fanaticism have been entrusted with the management of religion,

art and science and are putting the whole intellectual life, including all schools and universities and the whole press, into a party press strait-jacket; in which those who pose as incarnations of a new idealism are driving out others from their offices in order to appropriate them for themselves and to start a merry-go-round life. The disaster caused in this way may be so great that it will require decades in order to repair it."

### Buddha's Message the Only Solution

The author of this diagnosis finds in Buddha's Middle Path alone, a security for world peace. Japan with her Buddhist culture, we are assured, recognises that what is born of passion and mental blindness can never be the true Middle Path and Dr. Petzold hopes that the I. B. S. would accomplish the great work of educating the world with the true Buddhistic Law of Life, of standing up against this threat to freedom of thought and of protecting the ideals of humanity. They are fully cognisant of the central teaching of the Buddha, that message of peace for all mankind, which Emperor Asoka announced to an aching world, that "hatred can never be removed by hatred but only love and by great enlightenment."

We shall await with due interest, what steps the Society is taking to tone down Japan's *own* well-known military ambitions, and to promote international love and friendship.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**YOGA FOR THE WEST:** *By Felix Guyot. Published by Messrs. Rider & Co., 34 Paternoster Row, London, E. C. 4. Pages 192. Price Sh. 3/6.*

This book is written mainly for students of the West. The courses of discipline laid down by the Seers of the East have been adapted for practice under modern conditions. "I should like to add," says the author in the Introduction, "that the method I describe is not a theoretical elaboration; it is the fruit of more than thirty years' personal experience, and I have been able to observe its effect sufficiently on others to reveal it without apprehension to men of good will."

The method suggested is meant for those who are dissatisfied on account of the lack of harmony in their private and public life and have felt the call of the Absolute within. It will help them as a stout walking stick to weather the storm and stress of life. It embraces both psychical and physical training, leading the aspirant gradually to the ecstasy of beatific vision called Samadhi. But the path is not a very smooth and clear one. So the march forward should be slowly and steadily gone through. Over-zealous nature and spasmodic effort have often made it difficult to keep the proper balance and resulted in needless shipwreck. Those, however, who have patience and vigilance can ultimately reach the goal.

Muscular Relaxation; Exercises connected with the Organs of Circulation; Auto-suggestion and its Principles; Provisional Choice of a Religion; Dissociation of Thought from Language; Union with the Primary Ego: These headings taken at random show the extent and nature of the field covered by the author in this neat little volume. We welcome the book and recommend it to all who wish to know how the mind can be scientifically trained to soar into higher states of awareness and joy.

**PROBLEMS OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA:** *By F. M. De Mello, B.A., B. Sc. (Econ.) Oxford University Press, Bombay. Pages 68. Price Re. 1.*

Rural India is real India, for her peoples live in their seven lakhs of villages. The Indian village was once in a flourishing condition. Megasthenes, who visited India three centuries before the Christian era and who found the Indian village communities in full working order, has characterised them as so many "Little Republics"—a description later on adopted by Sir Charles Metcalfe when he referred to them. The description was fully justified. For in those days the Indian village was a self-governing unit with its council, the Panchayat, the members of which, though not necessarily always elected, were representative of the best brains, character and wealth of the village. It had its full development in South India where the village was a highly efficient, self-sufficing, economic and social unit as evidenced by the records of the Chola, Pandya and Vizianagaram dynasties.

Unfortunately owing to the operation of a variety of circumstances, the old Indian village has ceased to function to the extent it used to. The community sense is very much lacking in the village of today which is often torn by factions. The commonweal is neglected, and very much is left to be desired with respect to the comfort, cleanliness and health of the village. But the fact has to be borne in mind that the Indian village community is the greatest contribution which India has made to the world culture. Through the ages the nerve centre of India has been in her villages. Truly has it been observed by the poet Rabindranath Tagore, with a prophetic vision, that India has yet to play a great part in the shaping of the destinies of the future of mankind. The restoration of the village to its former

flourishing condition is thus a task of the first importance. Although, as stated above, various causes have tended to weaken its foundations, the old roots have not become quite dry, and every effort tending to the revival of the village has to be welcomed.

It is gratifying to note that during recent years considerable attention has been bestowed on the subject by public bodies and private individuals and much useful work done. But very much more remains to be done, for the task is a stupendous one. The subject was prominently brought to notice by the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India, who recorded their considered opinion that the well-being of India was intimately bound up with the prosperity of the country side.

The little volume before us is a reprint of the articles contributed by the author to the *Times of India*, Bombay, last year, indicating in general terms some of the fundamental defects of rural life in India, with suggestions as to the lines on which they could be met and overcome. The author is right when he says that for all the obstacles that stand in the way of the cultivator's welfare, his poverty is by far the most obstinate. A special chapter is devoted to it. At present the need of the cultivators is not only for relief from indebtedness but for profitable subsidiary occupations which would enable them to add to their meagre income from the soil. The importance of education and the co-operative movement as instruments of rural progress cannot be overestimated. Special chapters are devoted to these aspects of the problem. The writer has also drawn particular attention to the revival and improvement of village Panchayats which can be made to subserve the common interest of the villagers in a variety of useful ways.

We have perused with interest the neat little volume before us which will serve as an introduction to the problems of rural reconstruction and to a more detailed study of the subject.

A. S.

*JOURNAL OF VEDIC STUDIES*: Edited by Prof. Raghu Vira, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt. et Phil., S. D. College, Lahore. Annual Subscription Rs. 12 or Sh. 20.

We are glad to go through Vol. I, No. 1 of this large-sized magazine which is devoted to the publication of unknown and rare Vedic texts on a basis of comparative studies. This is to be issued three times a year. From the fact that A. C. Woolner, F. Edgerton and A. B. Keith are some of the members on the editorial staff, one can easily have an idea of the standard the magazine would be maintaining throughout. The present issue contains *Gonamika*, "a unique contribution to our knowledge of ancient cattle rites," and portions of *Drahyayana Srautasutra* and *Bharadvaja Srautasutra*. The last few pages contain diagrams of some types of Vedic altars. We repeat the concluding sentence of the Foreword: "Let there be concerted effort, and the stately word-structures of the ancients would once more stand high in their grandeur of design and nobility of purpose." We trust the magazine will "carry the words of antiquity to eager ports."

*SUPRABHAT*: Edited by N. K. Ayyangar, Srirangam, S. India. Annual Subscription: Inland Rs. 6; Foreign Rs. 8-8 or Sh. 11-6.

This is an Anglo-Vernacular monthly devoted to general Indian Culture, Sociology, Economics, Agriculture, Trade, Industry, Religion, etc. Vol. I, No. 1, sent to us (issued on 19-10-34) contains a beautiful picture of Swami Srinivasa Maha Desika and a character study of him by the Editor himself who is his disciple.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

DECEMBER, 1934

[No. 8

## HINDU ETHICS



सर्वे धर्मा राजधर्मप्रधानाः सर्वे वर्णाः धर्म्यमाणा भवन्ति ।  
सर्वस्व्याप्तौ राजधर्मेषु राजद्वारा धर्मवाहुद्वयं पुराणम् ॥  
मज्जेत्तस्यै तण्डनीनौ हतायां सर्वे धर्माः प्रचयेयुर्धिवुद्धाः ।  
सर्वे धर्माश्चाश्रमाणां हता स्युः क्षात्रे त्यक्ते राजधर्मं पुराणे ॥  
सर्वे त्यागा राजधर्मेषु दृष्टाः सर्वा दीक्षा राजधर्मेषु चोक्ताः ।  
सर्वा विद्या राजधर्मेषु युक्ताः सर्वे लोका राजधर्मं प्रविष्टाः ॥

All duties have kingly duties for their foremost. All the orders are protected by them. Every kind of renunciation occurs in kingly duties, O monarch, and renunciation has been said to be an eternal virtue and the foremost of all.

If the science of chastisement disappears, the Vedas will disappear. All those scriptures also that inculcate the duties of men become lost. Indeed, if these ancient duties belonging to the Kshatriyas be abandoned, all the duties in respect of all the modes of life become lost.

All kinds of renunciation are seen in kingly duties ; all kinds of initiation occur in them ; all kinds of learning are connected with them ; and all kinds of world's behaviour enter into them.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. LXIII, 27-29.)

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

## CHAPTER V

### The Role of the Preceptor in Youth

Veiled by My magical powers, I am not manifested before all. This deluded humanity does not know Me as beyond origin and change.

Gita VII; 25.

*Not within one's Choice to become  
the Preceptor or the Leader*

**S**PECIAL manifestation of the teacher-aspect in the Master's life began from the day he settled at Dakshineswar as the priest of the Divine Mother. It was the time of his spiritual practices. He was then mad after God. Yet what does it matter? A preceptor is always a preceptor; a leader is always so, from his very childhood. It is not that people meet together and after due deliberation make him their teacher or their leader. As soon as he appears before the society the common people become devoted to him; at once they bow down in humility and begin to obey him and learn at his feet. This is the rule. So Swami Vivekananda used to say, "A leader is always born and never created."

Hence it is found that great leaders of men are followed by the people with great respect even though they behave in a manner likely to be considered a grave offence in the case of any other man and punishable by the society. In this regard Sri Krishna says in the Gita, "Whatever he sets up as the standard is followed by the masses", i.e., whatever they do, that

becomes the norm of good conduct and thenceforth people act in accordance with it. Very strange indeed. But it has always happened and will happen in future too. Sri Krishna commanded, 'From today let the worship of Indra be stopped and that of Govardhana (a hillock) be introduced.' And men began to do so. Buddha declared, 'From today let there be an end of the slaughter of animals (in the name of religion).' At once the old law that 'animals are created for the sake of sacrifices' had to be given a new orientation. On a very sacred day of fast, Jesus permitted his disciples to take food and that became the rule. Mahomed married many a time and still he was respected as a spiritual giant, a man of renunciation and a leader of mankind. In all matters, great or small, whatever such men of eminence do or say, that becomes the ethical ideal for the rest.

*The Cosmic Ego-consciousness can  
be easily manifested in Great  
Leaders of men while it scarcely  
happens in the common run of  
people.*

The reason for this we have already stated. In great leaders, the limited selfish ego becomes totally



destroyed once for all and its place is taken by the cosmic ego, in the region between the relative and the Absolute. The nature of this ego is to do good to others. When the flower blossoms the bee knows it instinctively and arrives there in quest of honey; the flower need not send it a cordial invitation. Similarly when this higher ego dawns in an individual, people worried with mundane cares come to know of it somehow or other and hasten to him to attain peace. With great difficulty a faint glimpse of that cosmic ego may appear in ordinary men. But in the lives of great leaders we find it manifested, to some extent at least from their very early days. It gradually matures in youth; and finally, with its full growth we look with awe at the individual's wonderful achievements and wholly identify him with God Himself. For the manifestation of the superhuman aspect becomes so very natural in him that it becomes akin to eating and drinking, breathing and similar non-voluntary movements. Now at this stage when an ordinary mortal fails to measure the greatness of this divine character by his little selfish standard, what else can he do but, being overwhelmed with awe, consider him to be the Supreme Deity, and take refuge in him with intense faith and devotion?

*When did the Teacher-aspect fully mature and become Normal in the Master's Life?*

The same thing is found by analysing the Master's life. In his youth,

during the period of his spiritual practices, this attitude gradually developed from day to day. Ultimately it reached perfect maturity and became quite normal in him at the end of the period of his strenuous spiritual practices,—a period consisting of twelve long years. At that stage it was often beyond the ken of our ordinary mind and intellect to guess when the Master was identified with his limited self and when the teacher-aspect had taken possession of him with the appearance of the cosmic ego. But this happened only when the mood reached its fullest maturity. An elaborate description of this point will come in its proper place. Before that we think it necessary to present our readers here with a few instances of how in his youth, during the period of practices, the Master would occasionally come to possess that mood and behave like a different man.

*The mood of the Teacher during the Period of Practices, in the Master's dealings with Rani Rasmani and Mathur, her son-in-law.*

The first appearance of the teacher-aspect in the Master's youth is found in his relation with Rani Rasmani, the foundress of the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar, and her son-in-law, Mathuranath or Mathur Babu. None of us had, of course, the good fortune of seeing either of them. But from the facts that we have heard from the Master himself, it is clearly understood that from the very first sight they felt a sort of love towards the Master. It grew in course of time to an extent

not to be found anywhere else. Perhaps, for many of us it will be beyond conception that a man can have so much love and devotion for another man. Everything sounds like a fable. And yet, viewed superficially, the Master was then nothing but an ordinary priest while these people, though not high in caste, were at the top of the society, so to say, in wealth and honour, in culture and intellect.

#### *The Master's unique nature*

The Master's nature, again, from the very childhood, was quite uncommon. Wealth, honour, education, high-sounding titles behind one's name and all such things that make a man big in the public eye, were for the Master not at all worth counting. He would often remark, "From the top of the monument big, three-or four-storeyed buildings, tall trees, and the grass on the ground, look all alike in the same level." Similarly, we find that through his devotion to truth and his love of God, the Master's mind was ever pitched at such a height that, from there, the little differences in wealth, etc., that make us puffed up to the bursting point and look upon others with contempt, would disappear completely. Or, his mind would closely scrutinise the underlying motives in every action, and think over the ultimate effects of his relation with every person or object. He would compare in each case the experiences of others in similar conditions and thereby arrive at a deep-rooted conviction beforehand. Hence there was no scope at all

for the subconscious motives and undesirable after-effects to lead him astray even for a short while by their alluring false garbs.

"But," our reader may object here, "before such a fault-finding mind, all the defects in every thing will loom large and will not allow the man to proceed to do anything whatever in this world. He would thereby almost become an inert object." Very true indeed. Such a mind evidently makes one lose all determination and initiative and sometimes leads one to immorality and lawlessness too. But that happens only when it is not purified or freed from all desires beforehand and kept firmly rooted in the sublime goal of God-realisation. If, on the other hand, the mind is set in tune with absolute purity and a noble ideal, these very mental characteristics of deep penetration and fault-finding help an aspirant to speed on along the path of God-vision. That is why in the Gita Lord Krishna has insisted upon the acquisition, by the devout souls alone, of the spirit of renunciation through continuously observing the inherent evils of birth and death, decay and diseases.

Let us mark well to what an unusual extent this observation of defects was prominent in the Master's character from his very childhood. While going to school, when his mind ought to have been drawn towards educational distinctions and name and fame, he saw to the contrary that persons with high academic qualifications discussed

high philosophies and at the same time went about flattering the wealthy with the sole object of earning their bread and butter. At the time of marriage, instead of being attracted towards the pleasures of the world, he saw in it the acceptance of an eternal bondage, increasing of one's wants and then running about in quest of money,—all for the sake of a little pleasure that may last for a day or two; and even that is uncertain! Knowing that everything can be achieved by money, he ought to have put forth strenuous efforts for acquiring wealth. But he saw, instead, that wealth can give only

food and clothes, brick and mortar, but never God-realisation! One might try to remove the wants of the destitute by making big charities and thereby prepare the ground for being known as a generous and philanthropic man. But the Master argued in a different way. He thought that by one's lifelong effort one can, at most, start a few free schools and charitable dispensaries or some inns (wherefrom food-stuff can be supplied free to the hungry persons who come). But then would come Death and the wants of this world would remain as before.

Similar were his conclusions regarding all other matters.

## TYPES OF RESPONSE IN SPIRITUAL LIFE—I

### In Father's Wake

PSYCHOLOGICAL analysis has shown that the father is one of the most powerful factors influencing the growth of the child. While the mother supplies it with milk or food, and other things necessary for the maintenance of life, the father affords it protection from the manifold dangers of its child world. His superior physique, especially, impresses it with the idea of strength. Thus a father of real ability, possessing high intellectual attainments and enjoying a recognised position in society, must act as a great and permanent stimulus on the mind of the child during its receptive years. Fixing its attention upon him with love

and admiration, it must normally develop a strong tendency to imitate him and catch his ways, first of acting and gradually of thinking too. A thousand scenes where the father played a heroic part and the other members of society applauded him from their respective places in suitable backgrounds, must float before its mind, and in a most imperceptible manner goad it into healthy emulation. This is how the tendencies inferred to be acquired at birth come to be cultivated and turned into actualities. The father becomes a pleasing model and the child shapes its life-structure by revolving this model in its mind in what may be called a continuous informal meditation.

This makes the transmission of the Kula Dharma or the special virtuous characteristics of the family from generation to generation easy and certain in most cases.

### Opposite Reactions

But matters are not so smooth always. Sometimes the father, in spite of all his grandeur, unwittingly retards the growth of his child. Nay, his very greatness becomes a dangerous stumbling block; and instead of rousing the young one into healthy activity, it instills into it the idea that it can never equal him however much it might try. In spite of love, it then inwardly recoils from the father, and every fresh success of his widens the gulf between them till at last the child becomes timid and shy and devoid of the capacity for self-assertion. In some cases surprising relationships come about in course of time. The son, even when he attains maturity, retains a childish yearning to run into the father's arms but finds himself unable to approach him even for normal business, since for years together he has been avoiding him somehow and it is now all "too late" to change. An unaccountable aloofness has sprung up, to which both parties have got accustomed no doubt, but which they would fain get removed from their midst if only they could know how. Such children progressively grow sad and restless; and not unoften stray into wrong paths most helplessly in their search for substitute satisfactions. Careful analysis

would reveal that at the bottom of all the undesirable characteristics of the child there has been the grand picture of the father acting as an obsession, causing diffidence in place of emulation.

Opposite reactions come also when there are too palpable deficiencies in the father's character. The growing child notes the gaps created by the parent's habits and proceeds to fill them up, thus developing resourcefulness and self-reliance even at a comparatively early age. With the rise in reasoning power, the son assiduously cultivates such qualities as will enable him to undo the evils brought about by the father's defects, and raises up the prestige of the family much beyond the expectations others had about him in his younger days. Examples are numerous, of sons evolving into bold speakers and writers and showing remarkable powers of self-assertion and independence just because their fathers allowed their own intelligence and other qualifications to rust, and for some reason or other got into the habit of retreating whenever they ought to have forged ahead and carved honourable places for themselves in the public life. In such cases too the father acts as a permanent model, not however to be copied, but to be utilised as a constant reminder of the positive qualities which that model lacks and which should on that very account be acquired by his discerning son.

### Others including Teachers

What is true in the case of the parent is true also in the case of every other person whom the growing child knows intimately and has reason to love and respect at least for a time. The teacher is one such. Many have become great because their teachers were men who led sublime lives or created that impression by the noble ideas they preached consistently throughout their contacts with their students. Many a teacher has also dealt with his students in such a manner that the latter, when their turn came to handle younger brains, remembered too well the painful experiences of their earlier days, and adopted measures in which love appeared as love itself and not in the guise of avoidable cruelty.

A small story of olden days fully brings out this great psychological truth. A certain Ayoda Dhaumya, we read, was a specialist in training young men. He had three disciples, the last of whom was called Veda. "Veda, my child," said the teacher to him, "tarry some time in my house and serve thy preceptor. It shall be to thy profit." Veda, signifying assent, tarried long in the teacher's family mindful of serving him. Like an ox under the burden of his master, Veda bore heat and cold, hunger and thirst at all times without any complaint. And it was long before the preceptor was satisfied. Veda obtained good fortune and universal knowledge, but he had to undergo this severe

trial.<sup>1</sup> Receiving permission from Dhaumya, Veda left the latter's residence and entered the domestic mode of life. He in his turn got three disciples,—one of whom was the celebrated Utanka who started Janamejaya on his fire-sacrifice against the snakes. But he never told them to perform any work or to obey implicitly his own behests; for having experienced much woe himself while staying with his preceptor, he liked not to treat them with severity.<sup>2</sup>

### Religion and Mastering of Responses

The principle of these three kinds of response holds good in the case of spiritual practice as well. Religion is often viewed as offering some method by which God's grace is secured and added on to man. The devotee prays and longs for a vision or for a contact with his Beloved

1. अयापरः शिष्यस्तस्यैवायोदधौम्यस्य वेदो नाम, तमुपाध्यायः समादिदेश, वत्स वेद ! इहास्यतां तावन्मम गृहे किञ्चित्कालं शुश्रूषमाणा च भवितव्यं, श्रेयस्ते भविष्यतीति । स तथेत्युक्त्वा गुरुकुले दीर्घकालं गुरुशुश्रूषणपरोऽवसत्, गौरिव नित्यं गुरुणा धृपुं नियोज्यमानः शीतोष्णक्षुत्तृष्णादुःखसहः सर्वलाप्रतिकूलस्तस्य महता कालेन गुरुः परितोषं जगाम । तत् परितोषाच्च श्रेयः सर्वज्ञतां चावाप ; एष तस्यापि परीक्षा वेदस्य । 78 80.

2. तस्याऽपि स्वगृहे वसतस्तस्यः शिष्या बभूवुः स शिष्यान् किञ्चिदुवाच कर्म वा क्रियतां गुरुशुश्रूषा वेति । दुःखाभिज्ञो हि गुरुकुलवासस्य शिष्यान् परिक्षेशेन योजयितुं नेयेष ॥ 82-83, ch. iii, Paushya, Adi Parva, Mahabharata.

Lord. If he fulfills the conditions needed, grace descends on him or he enters into it, and he stands free and perfect. The defect of expressing things in this way is that the stress is put more on the fact that the practices, which we at present know only by their names, are *competent* to lead us to the goal. What exactly does each step in the practice demand of the aspirant, what change is effected in his mood or in the contents of his mind or in his attitudes towards things while he takes each step,—these are more useful than a mere assertion that the goal is one that *can* be reached. And unfortunately an explanation of these is not commonly met with.

We would therefore endeavour to look at religion as offering various steps, none of which can be considered successful till certain responses are mastered. Grace, as we would like to put it, comes *not after* the step is taken, but *as* the step itself. The devotee proposes certain desirable changes in his outlook, and instead of allowing them to remain simply in the realm of pleasant dreams, he takes the direct steps towards putting them into daily observance, using extra efforts to overcome the resistance of old habits and the pull of the accustomed satisfactions jeopardised by the reform. When such resistance has been broken down by an intelligent establishment of new connections in the mind, we may safely conclude that the proposed step is complete. It is profitless to expect that grace is going to come

down *after* this : for the fact is that it has already come down to the extent that he honestly tried. If higher principles are accepted and the inner workings regulated in accordance with them, the goal is naturally approached to a greater extent.

### Value of the Present

It may be objected that by this prosaic way of looking at it, we cut up grace into bits and take away all meaning out of the term by putting it as an equivalent of human achievement itself. True ; but the other way is equally bad. If we say that grace is going to come down *after a particular practice*, we put it on an exchange basis and fix a human price for God's gift, a limited amount of human energy for an infinite satisfaction. Our philosophers are very particular that we should not fall into the error of fondly expecting things to happen in a dim *future*. They want us to mind the *now*. What really matters is how we manage ourselves at the present moment. The future is after all only a succession of "present" moments ; and the healthy responses of one "present," if continued, must bring all future under control without any unreasonable gap of vain expectation. They therefore insist that we should not look for rewards. We are entitled only to act, to take the step. After his daily observances, the discriminating devotee surrenders to the Supreme Abode and Refuge of all men all the spiritual exercises done by him in

accordance with his special predilections, using his limbs, speech, thought, senses and determining faculty". In the absence of such surrender, he might be led to think that he is entitled to draw upon his practice for future satisfactions, as a rich man might draw upon his deposits in a bank by means of cheques. Emphasis would then be shifted to the wrong quarter, and longing for enjoyment would take the place of concentration on the responses to be mastered. If his mind is sometimes troubled by the idea of grace, he is free to analyse clearly and see if grace has not already manifested *as the control achieved*.

As for the objection that we are cutting up grace into bits, this theory is less objectionable than the one which would make grace wholly absent now and cause it to spout forth all on a sudden after we nearly pine ourselves to death by an indefinite belief in its ultimate manifestation. The wind of God's grace blows at all times and upon all alike. Those who unfurl their sails get its benefit to the extent that they take advantage of its constant pressure and manipulate their rudder. And lastly, if grace appears to be kept on a level with human achievement, including the highest, we might welcome it as a better arrangement than keeping them apart, staring at each other as if they are irreconcil-

ables. If they are to coincide at any time, it is more consistent to make them do so at every point of "now."

### Response to Idea of God

Let us now turn to analyse some interesting possibilities of response to the idea of God.

When a person sincerely prays to God, conceiving Him as all-pervading and gracious towards all His children, what transformations can take place in his mind? Without doubt, he must have some picture combinations in a manner and sequence which are entirely new to him. If he tries to keep the pictures vivid, he must begin to see his little world of relatives, friends, and enemies too, along with "others" who are "indifferent", *in some way* connected with his Lord. Further attempt at clarification must add fresh elements to his pictures to represent all-pervadingness and grace which he attributes to the Deity. If he persists in his practice, he will find that he himself is not a stationary figure or a mere spectator in that symbolical world of picture forms, presided by the Lord, but that he is a person who moves and thinks and acts on the basis of his own desires, active as well as dormant. Gradually his picture of himself will begin to change and evolve on account of his conception of the Lord coming into clash with some of his accustomed ways of thinking and acting. From this stage his mind would commence working on the basis of various self-created injunctions and

3. कायेन वाचा मनसेन्द्रियैर्वा बुद्ध्यात्मना वा  
प्रकृतेः स्वभावात् । क्रमेण यत्प्रसक्तं  
परस्मै नागम्यायेति समर्पयामि ॥

prohibitions, as for example, 'I shall leave it to the Lord ; He will see to that' ; ' This will be pleasing to my Lord ; I shall do it at all costs' ; ' I have omitted this item all along ; let me start it now at least' ; or ' I believe this is right ; if I am wrong, may the Lord clarify my vision'. It is needless to speak of the genuine educative value of such formulas and of their capacity to generate the forces required for fresh conquests in the spiritual field.

We may say roughly that this type of reaction is similar to that of the child when it loves its father and the grandeur of the father becomes the source of healthy emulation for it. In accordance with the conception of God's attributes entertained by the aspirant, picture combinations gradually emerge and attain vividness and definite shape in his mind till, by the force of such systematic training, virtuous formulas get into its structure and become the basis for all further thought and action. In a prayerful attitude he has to drill his mind in this process till he acquires the habit of putting symbolic pictures into it, at will, to represent any attribute of the Deity and his own desired responses.

### Meditation on Meaning

This constructive thinking and imagining are meant by Patanjali's advice, तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम्, that the repetition of the name of the Deity or of the Supreme Teacher residing in every heart should be accompanied

by "revolving again and again" (पुनः पुनश्चित्ते विनिवेशनं) the meaning portion of it in the mind. Though we may believe we know already what God's attributes are, it requires patient and intelligent clarification before our responding apparatus, namely thought connections and bodily mechanism, can be made to accept even the most correct of our notions. Picture-forms symbolising our ideas have to be held steadily,—and we might add, in an attractive and pleasing manner,—till they begin to filter into all parts of our being and supply us with the enthusiasm and courage needed to cut off old connections and establish new and more virtuous ones in their stead. It is significant that Patanjali points out that such "revolving" overcomes in due course almost all the obstacles blocking the path of the aspirant. In the group beginning with "disease, dullness, doubt," we find also the greatest of disturbing elements namely अद्विक्तिः, worldly-mindedness or the tendency of the mind to run unceasingly after various kinds of sensual enjoyment (चित्तस्य विषयप्रयोगात्मा गर्भः). The uprooting of this tendency means the conquest or the sublimation of all forms of greed and attachment, in other words, the complete overhauling of the responding apparatus. And constructive thinking and picturing till character changes must be the only remedy. Patanjali goes on to add another disturbing factor, instability, अनवस्थितत्वम्, or the fickleness of the mind, which does not allow it to remain in the poised



state even when it is reached.<sup>4</sup> The reason is not far to seek; responses are not thoroughly *mastered*; character has not been steadied sufficiently. The "revolving" process, it is pointed out, can overcome this defect as well.

### Meaning-worship

But does not this savour of image-worship? Is it not better to eliminate the pictures altogether and utilise reason as the one instrument for controlling reactions?

If one could use reasoning without the help of mental pictures, it were really grand indeed. But analysis would reveal that in every process of thinking, sounds and pictures are present in the mind. They may be hazy, confused or too flitting to be caught and remembered accurately. The trained thinker, however, steadies them and systematically uses selected ones as symbols for achieving definite ends. He passes on from pictures to the meanings they are capable of conveying to the hitherto disobedient, inert or slowly-moving response mechanism. When the picture or form portion of a thought is *by well directed effort*, pushed out of the focus of attention, and the meaning or attribute portion brought in<sup>5</sup>, effective thinking or reasoning is

mastered; and not till then. This is the ordinary Samadhi of India's higher psychology. It is wrong to call it image-worship; it is much more sensible to call it thought-worship or reasoning-worship, if one is very particular to call it by any name. According to our philosophers, sound and form on the one hand and meaning on the other are inseparable; and what the accurate thinker does is to pass,—not helplessly and in a stumbling manner,—from the sound-form aspect to the pure meaning aspect. In the beginning attention is focussed on the former while the latter is in the mind, no doubt, but out of focus and blurred as it were. Effort of the right type helps the aspirant to master the focussing apparatus to such an extent as to bring the meaning within focus, not "destroying" form altogether, but shunting it necessarily out of focus. It remains there all the time and may appear blurred. The trained thinker, however, can switch his mind back to form at will, without experiencing any feeling of inferiority, whereas the untrained man's will is inoperative and his focussings are forced upon him by the pressure of external stimuli. A more apt name for this process would thus perhaps be meaning-worship or illumination-worship. Forms or mental pictures are simply weapons used to overcome the resistance offered by our mental and bodily apparatus, and to scientifically manufacture a reasoning weapon *available at will*.

4. अनवस्थितत्वं यद्व्यायां भूमौ चित्तस्या-  
प्रतिष्ठा।

5. तत् (ध्यानं) एव अर्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूप-  
ग्रन्थं इव समाधिः।

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

### To Go or Not to Go

**I**T was evening when I went to see the Holy Mother. She lay on a mat on the floor near her couch. I prostrated before her and asked her in the course of our conversation, "Mother, it is a long time since I have been to our home at Kalighat. Should I go there now?"

*Mother*: Why don't you stay here for a few days more? Once you go to Kalighat you will not be able to come here so frequently. If you fail to come for one day, I become very anxious. You were not here yesterday. I was worried to think that you might be unwell. If you had failed to come today, I would have sent some one to inquire about you. But if your husband be ailing, or if you think that he likes your presence, then you shall have to go to Kalighat.

*Devotee*: He may not mind anything. But people criticise my staying with my sister for such a long time, away from my own family. It is my duty to look after my husband and the family.

*Mother*: Well, my child, you have seen enough of the family. Do not mind other people's criticism. They say many things like that. You shall have to go there at the time of the Durga Puja.

*Devotee*: Really I do not remember having worried about the family

at all. But it distresses me to think that I won't be able to come to you so frequently.

*Mother*: Well, then stay here for this month.

### Who is to Cure?

A Brahmachari came up and said to the Mother that a certain woman devotee wanted to see her. The Mother was dead tired and lay on her bed. She was evidently annoyed and said, "Dear me! I am to see another person! I shall die!" She sat on her bed. A little later, a well-dressed lady entered the room and bowed down to her touching the Mother's feet with her head.

"You can salute from a distance," said the Mother, "why do you touch the feet?" The Mother asked her about her welfare.

*Devotee*: You know, Mother, that my husband has been ailing for some time past.

*Mother*: Yes, I have heard of that. How is he now? What is the trouble with him? Who is treating him?

*Devotee*: He has been suffering from diabetes. His feet have swollen. The doctors say that it is a dangerous disease. But I do not care for their opinions. You must cure him, Mother. Please say that he will be cured.

*Mother*: I do not know anything, my child, God is everything. If

He cures him then your husband will be all right. I shall pray to God for him.

*Devotee* : I am now very happy, Mother. Sri Ramakrishna can never disregard your prayer.

She began to weep, putting her head on the feet of the Holy Mother.

The Mother consoled her and said, "Pray to Sri Ramakrishna. He will cure your husband. What is his diet now?"

*Devotee*. He takes Luchi and such other things as prescribed by the physician.

She soon took leave of the Holy Mother and went to see Swami Saradananda.

"I am burnt day and night with the pain and misery of others," said the Mother, and took off the cloth from her body. I was about to rub her body with the medicinal oil when a relative of the lady referred to above, entered the room to prostrate before the Mother. She had to get up again. No sooner did he leave the room, than the Holy Mother lay down again and said, "Let anybody come, whoever he may be, I am not going to get up again. What a trouble it is, my child, to get up again and again with my aching feet! Besides, my whole back is covered with pimples. Please rub the oil nicely."

### Right Attitude for Prayer

As I was rubbing the oil, the talk turned to that lady. The Mother said, "Her husband is so dangerously ill. She has come here to pray to God for his recovery.

Instead of being prayerful and penitent, she has covered herself with perfumes. Should one come like that to a shrine? This is the nature of the modern times."

As I was going to take leave of her, the Mother asked some one to give me Prasadam.

\* \* \*

### Generous Grant of Freedom

I went to see the Mother in the evening. Referring to a woman-devotee she had been saying: "He imposes strict discipline upon his daughter-in-law. He should not go to such excess. Though he should keep an eye upon her, he should also give her a little freedom. She is only a young girl. Naturally she likes to enjoy some nice things. If he becomes over-strict, she may go away from home or even commit suicide. What can he do then?" Looking at me, she said, "She had painted her feet a little. Is it a crime to do so? Alas! She cannot even see her husband. The husband has become a monk! I saw my husband with my own eyes, nursed him, cooked for him and went near him whenever he permitted me to. But at times I did not leave my room even for two months because he did not ask me to do so. He used to say: 'Her name is Sarada. She is the incarnation of Saraswati.\*

\* Sri Ramakrishna once said to Golap-Ma, regarding the Holy Mother, "She is the incarnation of Saraswati. She is born to bestow knowledge upon others. She has hidden her physical beauty lest people should look upon her with impure eyes and thus commit an act of sin." According to Hindu mythology, Saraswati is the Goddess of Learning and Wisdom.

Therefore she likes to put on some ornaments.' Once he said to Hriday, his nephew, 'See how much money there is in your box. Make some nice gold ornaments for her.' He was then ill. Still he spent three hundred rupees to make that ornament; and mind that he himself could never touch money.

### **Treatment of Public Opinion**

"After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna I returned to Kamarpukur. There was talk of my coming back to Calcutta. But people began to say, 'How is it possible? The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna are all young boys. How can you live with them?' I had known that I would live with my children. But still I began to sound people to find out how society would look upon my coming to Calcutta. Some of my neighbours said, 'Why should you not go? They are all his disciples.' I simply heard these opinions. There was an elderly lady in the village. She was very spiritual and intelligent. I asked her opinion about my coming to Calcutta. She said, 'Why do you hesitate about it? You must go to Calcutta. The young men are

all his disciples. You are their mother. It will be foolishness to object to your going to them. You must go.' After hearing her advice, many others also approved of my coming to Calcutta. Then I came here. Ah, what a sincere regard these young monks have for their Guru! On account of their respect for me, they hold dear even the very cat of Jayrambati!

### **Mother beyond Expectation**

"My own mother would sometimes say with great remorse, 'My Sarada has been married to a lunatic son-in-law. She has not known a family-life. She had no children. She will never know the happiness of being addressed as Mother.' One day Sri Ramakrishna heard her words and said, 'Well, mother, you need not worry about that. Your daughter will have so many children that she will be worn out by being addressed day and night as Mother.' Yes, my child, his words have been literally fulfilled."

After a while I bowed down before her and took leave for the night.

## ISWARA

*By Prof. Nicholas Roerich*

### A Dedication

"Oh, Thou unlimited by space,  
Existing Thou in matter churning,  
Primordial to flow of time,  
Impersonal—Divinity Triune!  
Spirit, Thou One and Omnipresent,  
Without abode, nor having cause,  
Whom no one has conceived as yet!  
All with His presence filling,  
Who all contains, creates, preserves,  
And whom we glorify as God!"

THUS in literary translation sounds the beginning verse of the immortal poem of the first Russian poet Derjavin, written by him in 1784.

"And in heaven I see—God!" exclaimed another great Russian poet.

The Credo begins: "I believe in One God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth and of everything visible and invisible."

Towards the Highest of the Highest, to the Breath of all Breathing, to the Atman of all Existence, all nations in all languages bring their sacred and immutable striving. Everyone within the limits of his heart, within the boundaries of his understanding of the Beautiful, dedicates the best names to Elohîm. May these sacred

names be manifold; but assembled into One, they sound in an inspiringly touching symphony of all that is the best, of all that is the highest, which could express the human mind and which could inscribe the embodied hand with all most sacred hieroglyphs.

The sacred imutability of God the Almighty is born in the brain of every child, when it first sees the splendour of the stars and thus turns towards the infinite worlds. This enlightened thought brings to the same eternal radiant conception: "My father has many Mansions." And another formula, as limitless in its greatness, is affirmed: "But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him in spirit and in truth" (John IV, 23/24).

### Science and God

A book under the title "Has Science discovered God?", a symposium compiled by A. H. Cotton, has just appeared. In this book are collected the opinions of the foremost scientists about God. Amongst the renowned names we see Millikan, Einstein, Oliver Lodge, Thomson, Byrd, Curtiss, Eddington, Jeans, Mather; and each one of them in his own way glorifies this Highest all-unifying Conception,

without which the very idea of the greatness of Infinity would be impossible.

The time has already passed when in the name of some false scientific materialism the great Realities were refuted. Atheism in the history of humanity appeared as a paroxysm of despair when man, due to his own faults, found himself in complete darkness and lost all understanding of the surroundings, of the great forms, of the meaning of fundamental principles. The last generation sometimes still admitted the self-conceited desecrative formula that, except themselves, nothing exists. All far-off worlds were for them only lamps for their own delight, and even the sun was of course only a source of their personal comfort.

Notorious for his atheism, Bazaroff stupidly exclaimed that after his death only burdock will grow out of him! Yet, such silly exclamations were not peculiar expressions of self-modesty. On the contrary they wanted thereby to affirm their bodily materialistic finality, being full of conceit in their relative and materialistic knowledge. Such a negative type is described by Turgeneff in his famous novel "Fathers and Sons"; Turgeneff understood well the fallacy of such ideas. Another Russian writer Dostoevsky, approaches the same subject in giving a type of would-be peasant atheism. This writer describes an atheist soldier who, wishing to produce the most desecrative action in order to convince himself

of the non-existence of God, placed a most sacred Church object on a pillar and shot at it. At the moment of this sacrilege he saw the vision of Christ Himself appearing on the very place. In this example of would-be atheism is described a peculiar evocation of God, a prayer for a miracle for a holy sign, which had always existed in the depths of the heart. Thus the human heart understands in its innermost depth that every form of destruction is negative.

We have before us a significant recently issued book of the miracles which occurred during the last years. In this book are compiled facts, certified by many witnesses and also mentioned in the press. These subtle manifestations are detailed at length, with particulars about the quality of radiance occurring during these phenomena and with all effects and impressions upon the many witnesses. Elsewhere there are similar records about the miraculous healings at Lourdes. And again we have information that in 1925, in the town of Kostroma on the Volga river, an aged monk passed away, in whose papers records we found about a path to the sanctuaries of the Holies of Himavat. And the Siberian old-believers (an orthodox sect retaining ancient Christian belief) still go on pilgrimage to the sacred Belovodye ("White Waters") and are striving to the highest communion with God. On the same path one meets the "don-dam don-pa," the so-called highest form of

Understanding of Buddhist-Tibetan consciousness.

### Signs for the Discerning

As soon as one leaves the path of senseless negation and strives on the path of Good, on the path of radiant creative thought, one is overwhelmed by the innumerable facts and signs from all peoples of the whole world, the value of which will be at once perceived by the pure heart. All nations seeking God and manifesting God know in their hearts also of a glorious future. Messiah, Maitreya, Kalki-Avatar, Muntazar, Mitolo, Saoshyant—everyone in his own way and according to the best of his understanding expects this radiant future, sending his heart-felt prayer to the One God Almighty. In Isphagan the White Steed for the Great Advent is already saddled. A Rabbi in Hama-dan will say: "You are also Israel if you search for the Light!" Brahmins are coming in order to celebrate together with you amidst spring flowers the great Sri Krishna. Everyone of them in his own way striving towards the good and the Blessed Future, knows God.

In a remarkable book "On Eastern Crossroads" by J. St-Hilaire, is quoted an inspiring saying about the veneration of the Guru:

"I recall a small Hindu who found his Teacher. We asked him, 'Is it possible that the sun would glow to you if you would see it without the Teacher?'

The boy smiled: 'The sun would remain as the sun, but in the pre-

sence of the Teacher twelve suns would shine to me!'

The sun of wisdom of India shall shine because upon the shores of a river there sits a boy who knows the Teacher.—"

In this hearty veneration of the Hierarchy of Light is manifested an unwavering belief in God; even more so, is manifested not only the belief, but even a realisation of God, which leads not only to God-seeking but to the manifestation of God. The knowledge of the omnipresence of God, existing in every grain of sand, not only does not belittle the Greatness, but on the contrary gives reality to all subtle conditions, to all far-off worlds, to everything perceived by the human eyes, and moreover to everything that the human heart knows in its innermost depth. The Heart—the Sun of suns, this altar of the Almighty! Verily not for long have science and great religions been parted. All new discoveries of energies, rays, waves, rhythm and all glories unseen to the eye, riches of the actual Might of God, again attract every honest study, which unflinching leads one along the infinite Hierarchy of Light; ascends towards the highest beautiful regions where neither petty earthly divisions, nor malice and hatred exist, but where the Great Agni-Fire of creative Thought eternally shines. And in the radiance of the great Thought of the Almighty the human thought is also enlightened by the flame of the awakening Heart.

### Significance of the Heart

Up to now Western science has attributed to the heart only physiological functions, ignoring its higher meaning as the transmuter of the subtlest energies, which incessantly pass through it and nourish and refine the consciousness. The Hindus know from old traditions that the great Manas has its abode in the heart; and not without reason, Hindus when speaking of thought, place their hand on the heart. Thus the apparatus of the brain, sometimes forcibly divided from the activity of the heart, again becomes a true co-worker of reality. And in this turning to co-operation is again expressed the great conception of omnipresence of the Spirit, of God. The conception of co-operation predestined to humanity for the glorious future, is indeed close to the true realisation of God. Those strong in spirit, were not frightened at the responsibility of the formula of Imitation of God. "The Imitation of Christ" by Thomas A. Kempis contains in no way self-conceit, but is a call towards highest co-operation!

The East with its ancient traditions watched with amazement the attempts of science to separate itself from the Highest. For it was in the East that the heart was acknowledged as the first conductor to the Altar of God. The Hermits of Mt. Sinai, all Prophets and all Rishis, imbued by their striving towards God, knew the highest possibilities of our spiritual guide—the human heart.

### The Unspeakable's Name

Swami Vivekananda justly says that some of the modern thinkers, because of the diversity of understanding of conceptions, raised the question whether it is not necessary to replace the word God by some other definition. But the wise Swami of course arrives at the conclusion that in this term are accumulated so many of the highest human strivings, that its deep reality should not be touched. Indeed every blasphemous substitute would be similar to primitive searching, when the human mind, still bound by many crude circumstances, tried to bring the conception of the Infinite Greatness to its own earthly conditional understanding and definitions.

The conception of God, this infinite number of highest qualities, is of course inexpressible through our earthly limited vocabulary. But the Heart in its own unlimited language knows this highest wisdom of Infinity, the rays of which play on the Lotus of Consciousness. I remember how one of my late dear friends, the renowned poet Alexander Blok, ceased visiting the Religious Philosophic Society. On being questioned about the reason of his absence, he answered: "Because they speak there of the Unspeakable!" This great Unspeakable, Indescribable, was for him a reality. And indeed, with his fine sensing of a poet, he felt the rudeness of verbal disputes of so High, so Fine, so Infinite a conception, which sounds only in the heart. Every word



about God already inflicts some blasphemous limitation to this untold Greatness.

### Even Partial Realisation Saves

Now is a special time to remember God, to remember the Commandments of old Ordainments, to remember the Indescribable, the Unspeakable, the Undefinable, the Infinite and at the same time to remember what is so near to us, what saturates every human heart when it thinks of the Common Good. How beautifully is expressed the Divine Omnipresence in the best Commandments!

The world is shattered by all kinds of crises. In this misery, in this poverty, once more the Great Conception is raised, which, if only partly realised, would transmute human life into a beautiful garden. A breaking away from God, a breaking away from the free, unbound radiant knowledge, a breaking away from the predestined joy of perfection, would turn the significant life of this world into an Island of Tears. Yet our lot is not misery, not unhappiness is predestined; the highest joy, the creative tremor of thought, the fragrance of the Altar of the Heart are ordained. Not an

Island of Tears, but a beautiful Garden, a Garden of transformed Labour and Knowledge is the domain of all people who turn towards God.

Derjavin concludes his poem "God" with the following lines:

"Creator, I am thy creation!  
I am the being of Thy Wisdom!  
Thou Giver of the Blissful Source  
of Life,  
Thou Spirit of my soul, and  
King!

To Thy Wisdom it was needed  
That my immortal Be-ness pass  
Through the abysses of death;  
That my soul be clad in mor-  
tality  
And that through death I should  
rejoin

Thy Immortality, Oh Father.  
Oh Inexplainable! Beyond Con-  
ception!

I know that useless are  
Imaginations of my soul  
To draw Thy shadow;  
But if glorification be,  
Then helpless mortals  
Cannot better express esteem,  
Than raising up themselves to  
Thee,  
To disappear in forms immortal  
And render grateful tears."

## RELIGION AND LIFE'S HARMONY

*By Prof. S. C. Sengupta, M.A.*

### Religious Colouring throughout

**T**HE *Vijaya Dasami* is the day of the exchange of greetings and salutations amongst the Hindus. After the "immersion" ceremony\* is over, friends and relations meet in embrace and partake of sweetmeats, all sense of bitterness being forgotten for the moment. Those who live in distant countries send and receive their greetings and courtesies. In this all Hindus join, even those who may not have their faith in the Puja itself. Evidently, this social aspect of the matter has about it a sweetness which even the stoutest rationalist would like to relish with pleasure. Those who know all about the religious ceremonies of the Hindus know it well that a Hindu's social and spiritual life may not be cut into two, the one always influencing the other. A Hindu's welfare is regarded mainly from a religious viewpoint. His family life, social life and public life—his duties to his own people and to his fellow-citizens are all coloured by his spiritual faith and nothing that has not its religious sanction is matter for his acceptance. A son would obey his father because it is his religious duty to do so. A wife

would follow her husband as a spiritual obligation. A subject would love and be loyal to his king because his Shastras enjoin it. So all individual peculiarities or idiosyncrasies which might tend to strike a jarring note in the social or political life of a Hindu would at once be hushed into silence by the superior voice of religion. Peace and harmony would thus invariably follow life in a society or state having its foundation deep down in the religious fears of man.

### Duties along with Rights

If religion teaches me to be good and fond of peace by developing all my virtues, is it not wise for me to believe in it and practise it? But we are now taught to believe in ourselves and in our own sense of what is proper and improper. Why should a son blindly obey his father or a wife her husband or a subject his king? Even a king or a father or a husband is not without his fault or error! Is it not thus extremely foolish to follow the abstract injunctions of religion and refuse to look facts in the face? While the younger generations thus argue, finding obedience to be an inconvenient cult, they forget that they are also liable to errors. Chances of making mistakes belong more to the young than to the old. The conflict between youth and age

---

\*After the Mother Worship is over, the specially made *imag* is consigned to the river, where one is near by.

would vanish, if both young and old remembered their respective rights and duties, guided by their religious sense.

The Hindu believed in religion to be the main fact of his existence in all its stages. If in every stage of life, religion be a man's guiding principle and if every member in a family, in a society or government—high and low, rich and poor, king and subject, man and woman, old and young—placed one's religion above one's whims, human relations would be softened and smoothed and sweetened. While a father expects obedience and reverence from his son, he should not be wanting in his affection and charity. If a husband looks for his wife's loyalty and love, he must not omit to reciprocate the same towards her, each being guided by his or her religious sense. If a Hindu marriage be properly observed, it will be found that the Shastraic injunctions are not so many *ex parte* decrees favouring only the husbands. Duties are mutual. Hindu religion has not overlooked the supreme fact that it is only in mutual fulfilment of obligations that the essence of social relations lies.

### Example of Joint Family

But today the individual man or woman thinks only of himself or herself *in a state of rude and pathetic divorce from others*. The modern outlook seems to be much more selfish than the old in this that, while the individual

man thinks today of his advancement, he forgets that his brother should also be given his chances to rise. The joint family system has its drawbacks in a modern society but it worked admirably well at a time when every member of the family remembered to do his part. One may, by accident or by merit, find oneself more favourably circumstanced than another, that is no reason why all one's gains should be directed to one's own selfish end. In a Hindu society it was obligatory on the eldest member of it, as a matter of religious scruple, to stand by and support all other members of it, if the latter were unable to earn their living. This, according to modern ideas, is unfair but if the matter be viewed closely, it will be seen that, if all the members of a family remember their duties towards one another, such an arrangement has got its advantages and compensations. Life becomes easier and smoother where the spirit of perfect cordiality prevails and where the sense of responsibility and superiority on the part of the head of a family goes with a corresponding sense of duty and sweet dependence on the part of those under him.

### Cohesion Lost

*Modern relations are really one-sided.* If a son today is anxious to be helped by his father in the furtherance of his ambition, he should by no means have a short memory, while success becomes his. If a wife today loudly clamours for her rights, should she forget that

her husband may as well claim his share from her? Society, as it is now, has really disintegrated itself into so many isolated units, each falling off from the other and losing its power of cohesion. It is rather alarming to notice how rapid has been this process of disintegration in the Hindu society, the old sanctions of religion being thrown every day into the dustheap, and, all is getting topsy-turvy.

### **Healthy Assimilation Needed**

Some blame Western culture and its influence for this state of affairs. But it is uncharitable to ignore our own inability to assimilate what is best in others, while retaining what was best in our ancestors. We should not be eager to fix the blame on others, being blind to our own faults. Has the West taught us to forget God? If we look to some of the Christian countries, notably England, do we not find how the force of religion is still operative there both on the social and political life of man? This is why—if I am not mistaken—England has so far been able to resist, with success, the new-fangled and subversive doctrines of all sorts, which have come to invade some of the Christian countries in Europe. The true Englishman still regards his Bible

and his Church as much real as his Shakespeare and his home. He has not banished God from his life. Let us remember this fact and also remember our own ancestors.

Lost to the regulative principle of religion, the modern Hindu has come to forfeit the peace and harmony which were the heritage of his ancestor who saw everything and everybody around him as friendly to him. There was thus no discord or disorder anywhere in his life and while in a state of sweet agreement with his environments, the Hindu of old could easily soar in his meditations and establish his relationship with the Infinite. In fact the civilisation of man should aim primarily at such freedom as may help him, freed from the sense of strife with which the primitive began his life on earth, to get on with his mental and spiritual needs. Life with man should be something better than a mere struggle in the physical plane. He should have ample leisure, with his physical requirements reduced to their minimum, to seek harmony within. The more he is able to realise this harmony, the more will things in the outer world appear to be at peace with him.

---

# FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

*By Swami Nirlepananda*

## Lessons Taught by the High-souled

WE are all apt to forget the noble and magnanimous acts of the great among us. It holds true of Bengal and all-India too. Speaking loosely we may say that till yesterday, to see even an official of lower rank, almost signified dressing oneself up with a pantaloons, tie, coat and all the necessary adjuncts of European costume. Once again, for the benefit, welfare and awakening of India the *Lion of Gurjara* (if one has the eye to look at him in that light) has stood before India and incidentally before the world, with a mere *loin cloth* on. He is acting and saying almost to the letter what Vivekananda urged us to *do and declare*. He is boldly saying before the officials, non-officials and all else—"I am an Indian. The cobblers, the Mehtars are the very flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood. They are my brethren."

We read in the papers how on board the ship to London (for the Round Table Conference) Bapuji cleverly managed to dispose of a costly Kashmiri cloth presented to him. From a rich woman, a fellow passenger on the same boat

he managed to secure a rather *fancy price* instead, to be spent for India's poor and destitute. Will India remember, for a yet long time to come, the lesson he is teaching; or will she forget him and shelve him off with our Chaitanyas and Vivekanandas—the dead noble, whose names are to be recounted and life-stories repeated and re-told before big anniversary meetings merely? Will the snobbish in dress among us once again *be themselves* and give up all undesirable and unsuitable aping and extravagance? The great call now is—Do.

## Influence among Hill-folk

Gandhi has become at the present moment a magic name for the Indian nation to assert and realise its own self. The truth of this statement became quite palpable and tangible to me in a strange way. I have seen in solitary, hilly, wild regions of Bengal, far away from the Railway line, men and women—who are almost pursuing the same line and way of life even from the beginning of time—invoking and seeking the divine help of Gandhi in times of drought and on occasions of other injuries to their crops—their sole property. You and I have a right to jeer at it and call it

Under the heading *Where are We?* in several articles the writer formerly gave to the readers of V. K. his experiences and studies of villages ranging continuously from 1927–33. Each part is complete in itself. Yet there is a running link. He has the pleasure to continue the same theme.

rank *superstition*! Modernism has only touched them in their occasional use of umbrellas and kerosine hand lanterns in certain quarters; and that by those among the community who have got up on Railway bogies after walking great distances from their jungle homes on seasonal exoduses for work as agricultural labourers chiefly or as mill-hands in rare cases. These were approached by Congress workers for votes in the name of Gandhi, and beseeched and requested to refrain from intoxicating drinks and dances in *melas* (fairs), which have been giving death-blows to the morality of their womenfolk.

The innumerable Santhal women from all the surrounding quarters, who so long joined merrily in the Sri Panchami Dance carnival at the Khatra village, Bankura, Bengal, have all ceased from doing so for the last few years. A slow reformation movement is working and making itself felt in their fold. They come by hundreds, purchase things, meet distant relatives, institute proposals of marriage in some cases and go away. In ancient India there was in vogue among the Kshatriyas, a form of forceful marriage known as *Rakshasa* marriage. The Mahabharata and the Smritis furnish clear and ample evidence of this. The groom party with its allies and co-villagers come prepared to fight over a young girl whom somebody among them takes a fancy to marry, even if the legal guardians oppose. This gives rise to an uncouth and undesirable tumult

over the Mela ground. In a Mela at Khatra there were only three or four such cases among the Santhals, —happening inspite of the best efforts of a now defunct local Dharamsala's volunteers to argue with their respective *Mukhyas* or leaders and prevent the occurrence of such untoward scenes. In this community of uneducated men and women every piece of good and healthy measure has to be pushed and recommended in the name of Gandhi. That name pacifies practically all opposition and seems to make everything plain before them. They do not actually know the life of Gandhi Mahatma. But this much anyhow they are mysteriously convinced of, that Gandhi means the upliftment and self-assertion of India's down-trodden masses. Gandhi means shunning of all finery in dress and food.

### Symbol of Elevation and Self-expression

From an actual observation of the slow process of rejuvenation one cannot but conclude that the God of India is actually guiding and moulding our folk. Roughly for the last eight hundred years India is under outside subjection. It is not unreasonable to suppose therefore that the right and proper time has arrived for us to have our birth-right as a nation. It is bound to come as a matter of course. Gandhi seen in this light, is a mere peg of the Almighty, an instrument or a fit vehicle for fulfilling and hastening the process, a *sacred mantram* for *elevation and self-expression* in

the best sense of the term. I do not think that it is unreasonable to conclude so when one sees the interior of a district, we have just referred to, far from the din and bustle, agitation and commotion, the so-called *light* and *leading* connected with some of our big towns. One has of course to mix with the inhabitants to study first-hand their mind and material circumstances.

### Admirable Habits and Capacities

In the towns we have seen and are still seeing *emancipated women*. There are afoot at present movements which really are trying to give them a good turn. Attempts are being made to bring out all that is best, highest and most laudable in them. But formerly this class with a few honourable exceptions were all wallowing in fashion, foppishness and luxury. The type of uneducated, unlettered, *emancipated* (for all time) Santhal women that I have seen in these hilly places infested by wild animals, has filled me with admiration over them. It is a feature of Indian life of which all of us should be proud. And our attempt ought not to be in the line of eradicating their healthy habits of hard, masculine, almost Herculean physical labour. They are almost fearless, full of joy, full of health, full of mirth over their own work. Even in the excess of summer heat in this region, they gladly take up their shovel when the sun is at its meridian and is emitting fire as it were over all the surrounding atmosphere.

Their food is as plain as we can conceive of. On certain festive occasions or after their return from hunting, they have curries or roasted meat. But the ordinary normal diet is watery rice and salt. All the agricultural fields literally cut out of solid, hard rocks are their own *handiwork*. Commonsense says that proprietary right of these fields ought to go to those who have fashioned them out after such hard, solid toil. I was glad to see these naturally emancipated women working jubilantly in the village called Gunpura near the well-known Rowtara. Every cell of their body seemed to be emitting ideas of strength, self-help and *power*. They form one of our types of Amazonians.

The West has its corybantic, bobbed-hair, emancipated, suffragist women. Conservative Eastern countries like Turkey are fast competing with the West, putting off the Purdah of women, for good or evil we do not exactly know. But in the villages of Bengal there is no Purdah for women practically speaking. They have their veil when they stir out to have water etc. which acts for the young ladies as a necessary deterrent against familiarity with the opposite sex. It is a delicate protection. Cramped, confined life for women is undoubtedly to be condemned on the ground of mere health but we do not for that uphold the modern practice of indiscriminate, free unhampered mixing with the opposite sex. We think that social morality will be at stake if we allow this

without the much necessary proper precautions.

To return to the theme of the Santhal women we were speaking of. Herbs and trees supply them with necessary medicines for cure of their bodily maladies. They now and then rub Neem oil and turmeric pastes over their bodies, which have the efficacy of warding off all manner of skin diseases. The skin is black, mostly jet black, but *bright black* with evident expression of fullness and exuberance of health. There is beauty in it if we have the proper eyes to look and appreciate. The proportionate and symmetric formation of their bodies—eyes, noses, hands and feet and every limb—is to be noted. Free, open air physical exercise has much to do with it. Bengal has a tradition of possessing the sense of idealising beauty in black colour with a keen eye over the formation of human bodies. White skin but odd formation does not appeal to the real connoisseurs who know the bodily *Lakshanas* (signs). Otherwise how can we account for the conceptions of *Syāmā* or Sri Kali and *Syāma* or Sri Krishna—dicties seated over and adored in the very heart of the race, both described and painted in the Shastras as black but having perfectly shaped bodies?

The simple, aesthetic sense of these rustic women is also to be praised. In the *Bhagavatam* we read of the women of Vraja, that on *gala* days or festive occasions they dressed their hair and adorned

their plaited locks with bright, coloured flowers. The same tradition is seen to be maintained by these country-side daughters of Ind. They are rigid on one point, without exceptions. However costly and palatable dishes you may supply, the Santhal womenfolk would not agree to take boiled rice in the houses of any other castes, save themselves. Even the request of Brahmins held high in village society would not be complied with. The rule is lax in the case of their men, we do not know why.

### Strong though Famished

It was undoubtedly meaning these parts of our dumb masses that Swami Vivekananda said: "They have the strength in them of turning the tide of the world, famished as they are, by eating a handful of *bhāna* (fried rice)." I have seen in Khatra in extreme blood-curdling winter, the Santhal men and women with their very scanty utensils—all without warm clothes—spending whole nights away underneath banyan trees in wide open spaces, and freezing, blowing wind all round! We high-class people were shivering within closed doors at that time. Admiration for their painstaking habits does not know any bounds. Parties and groups—many of them—were temporarily leaving their village homes for work and for earning money. The bracing climate of these places, healthy water and free air have given them strong-built frames, which even, cannot withstand the attacks of malaria when in search



for work they have to spend months in the other, malarial parts of Bengal. Even these folk are much physically reduced and emaciated when they are seen returning home with cash-money in their thread bags but swollen and enlarged spleen in their stomachs.

### Fearless in the Midst of Terrors

Beyond the place known as Rani-bandh it is all rocky, dense and thick forest. It was an uphill march. We were on a taxi-cab, meandering with great difficulty through hard stones. Really the road, if we call it so, was not motorable. The *Sal* trees were standing on those solitary places as so many sentinels to watch the welfare of the forest tract, as it were. They looked like so many presiding deities. For us, townsfolk, it was rather a sensational, an unusual experience. Even in the daytime in the full blaze of the sun it seemed to be a very bold thing, a bit enterprising to penetrate or tread through that path. It was steep on both sides. If by chance a man's feet slipped, the bosom of death was inevitably his. There was absolutely no chance of recovery. The sound of the automobile seemed to be disturbing the fearful, dangerous denizens of the forest. We were shuddering and expecting some of them coming to have a bumper feast over us. But very fortunately none turned up.

Yet sparsely set, there were Santhal huts in the bosom of that wild nature. There were groups of families sure to interest the anthropologists a good deal. It is fashion-

able for us to call ourselves *civilised*. But there is much to learn and observe from their manner of life. They were *fearless*. Otherwise it was impossible to spend lives in that extreme solitary region. Mere loin cloth was upon them. Some very plainly stated that their children were playing. A tiger suddenly turned up and took away one. It was just a matter of fact with them; nothing exceptional, untoward or thrilling about it. They are a race of *heroes*. And they did not rest silent. They said, "We at once came out to meet the situation with our defensive, crude arms, our arrows, bows, *kars*, etc. Finally, after a tough fight we were able to take vengeance on it and had it killed before our very eyes on the same day."

### Discipline and Martial Spirit

A police officer was once sent up from Bankura Sadar to inquire into a murder case in a few Santhal Bustees in the Rowtara region we are speaking of. He had a few Sepoys with him. He recounted the following interesting story to me. He turned up with great inner quaking of heart; for he knew that in carrying out his grim duty he was obviously not safe and that they were a desperate folk and practically beyond all rule. The chief or *mandal* sounded the bugle to fall in. At once all gathered round him in a circle. There was perfect obedience in the fold. If anybody had the heart to disobey him or disagree with his decision, a summary trial awaited him. His head was at once

chopped off. It was a Star Chamber procedure. The chieftain's word was law. He was the overlord, the master, the suzerain, the autocrat, the benevolent despot—all in one. The deed at the point of inquiry was evidently extremely heinous. But at the instigation and obvious instruction of the headman, the very wife of the man murdered gave evidence before the police officer in a bold, clear, unambiguous voice that nobody murdered her husband. A tiger just killed him. The officer at once pointed out to her the visible, tangible inconsistency. A child even could not make a thoughtless statement like that. There were enough signs of blows of weapons all over the body. On the very face of it, it was an impossible thing for a wild animal to do like that. But all manner of mild persuasion, admonition, anger or fear of further trouble or punishment were of no avail. She proved obdurate, unmoving like a rock, without the least sign of budging an inch from what she said. The real truth could not be tapped out. What could the officer do in spite of his best efforts? Races on the borderland, throughout history, generally prove unruly, wild and desperate. These Santhals were living at the boundary line of three districts. A bold imagination could of course think of them after proper taming and training as forming India's future militia under Swaraj Government. Seen in this light they are the *Kshatriya*, fighting or martial units of the land. At least the material

and potentiality are there. This is, by the way.

### **Courtesy and Service when not meddled with**

The headman finally told the officer that further pressing for the truth would be of no avail. The safety of the whole party would thereby be at stake. But if he meant to return safe with what evidence he got, he was at perfect liberty to do so. They would show him due and proper courtesy. Some among them might be taken to lead his party through the jungle track.

The officer got an attack of fever there. They gave him their home-treatment. A kind of juice of forest leaves was prepared. He drank it. In a day or two he got round. They gave him their strengthening, delicious diet. They prepared excellent palatable and eatable burnt meat, a kind of indigenous roast. He relished it a good deal. The officer thought it prudent not to push the thing further in that first stage of inquiry. He returned to the Sadar and reported the whole thing for further actions.

### **Result of Undue Cutting Down**

In spite of the preservation of forests by laws, these forests are fast being destroyed. As a result of it there has been dearth of rain in the immediate zones round about. For want of fuel and big logs for building purposes the big paying trees are being cut away and destroyed. Everything has to bow

down before the all-exacting law of demand or necessity. As a result of this, recently round about Khatra there have been stray cases of deaths from attacks of tigers

whose dens have been disturbed. A cow-boy was mortally wounded. It is but a phase of that eternal fight between nature and man, externally speaking.

## PUBLIC LIFE, TRUE AND SPURIOUS

By Dr. S. Banerjee

MOST of us, an overwhelming majority I should say, desire to have a public life; to be talked about; to see our names appear in the newspapers; to be asked for our opinion on current topics; to have correspondence with notables; to be called to address meetings; to be requested to attend parties; to be elected to the councils; in short, to be a cynosure of all eyes before which we would *studiously* blush, declaring to be "fed up" and wanting to be relieved soon. (Of course this last is true only after one has attained his goal.) These are signs of public life no doubt and no politician worth the name is to be found without them. But there still remains the question of true and spurious public life; in other words, whether the public life is desired as a goal for itself, or as a necessary means of disinterested public *service*.

### Discipline Behind

The truth is that when we desire the so-called public-life we take only a surface view of things and have an inclination to imitate the *outer form* of the true public man instead of the inner essence, of which the outer form is often a

necessary expression. We see only the fruit, the matured result which the true public man seems to enjoy, but we do not dive deep and see of what strenuous discipline, ordeal and sacrifice—involving in a subject nation like ours, incarceration and the like—is the result which we call public life. The difference between the true full-fledged public man and an aspirant is like the difference between the seed of the wheat-corn in the field and the finished bread on the dining table. We can just imagine the long processes undergone before we have the bread before us to soothe our hunger,—ploughing of the field, sowing of the seed, sprouting of the plant, maturing of the corn, reaping of the harvest, separating the grain, crushing of the wheat into flour, kneading of the flour and finally baking it. Suppose a man gets his bread by working out all these processes himself and another, just buys it from the bazaar,—we have the true public man and the spurious.

So the spurious public man can and does exist? Yes indeed. To him, it is death when the bubble of fame bursts or a particular plan

of action proves futile; to the true public man, they do not matter at all, for he neither desires it nor strives *after* it, but it comes in spite of his not asking for it. It even pains him, as can be seen in the closing paragraph of the Mahatma's autobiography. The joy of service is reward enough for him, if any reward is to be his incentive at all. Moreover, in the spurious public man, the heart and the lips are apt to differ, while in the true one they are in unison.

### True Asceticism

With the advent of the Gandhian cult of soul's education, opinion is divided as to whether asceticism is the real foundation of public life, especially in a slave country like ours. If Gandhi is great, so have been Das and Nehru. The latter were no ascetics; they were good, rather luxurious livers on the contrary. This is again taking a superficial view of things. For with fat living, there must have been a deep undercurrent of discipline, of sacrifice and disinterestedness. Otherwise it could not sprout out overnight when they left their palaces and stood on the road and joined

hands with "the poorest, the lowliest and the lost." Said J. M. Sen Gupta of Das, "Deshbandhu was a Yogi from his birth. And he was totally unattached to all the luxury amid which he lived."

With the lamp of self-denial ever burning in the heart, it is of no account *how* one lives,—an ascetic life or a luxurious life. This, in short, is the great principle of the Gita, as is well known. Many of us have seen war-films. The soldiers and officers were dressed spick and span; they had shaven clean; parted their hair; put on their best clothes; laughed and cut jokes with their comrades; in short, presented a perfect picture of sensuous enjoyment of life, for which anybody amongst us would have got the enviable title of "nawab". But what happened when the call came? They immediately rushed to the very jaws of death; laid down their lives for the sake of their country. This exactly is the spirit that lends substance and value to the public life of a true public man, though he may seem to lead an easy life from outside.

# MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

(In the discussion that follows, it is shown why causality has been taught by the wise. It is also shown that the appearances of perceiver, perceived, etc., are similar to the crookedness or straightness appearing in a firebrand in motion. Ed.)

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

Production of things (that is, causality) has been taught by the wise for the comprehension of those people who believe in the reality of external objects, who perform the duties of their caste and status (Varnashrama), and who are always afraid of the absence of causality.

(42)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

By the wise people who are Advaitins (non-dualists), the production of things (that is, causality), has been taught for the comprehension of such persons as are engaged in the performance of the duties of their caste and status (Varnashrama), and who firmly believe in the reality of external objects. Such people, being of an inferior grade of intelligence, require the aid of causality, for grasping (the higher truths of Vedanta). Those engaged in the study of Vedanta naturally realise the unborn and non-dual Atman and do not regard the external objects as real. The ritualists (Srotrias) who are dull-witted, are, through want of discrimination, always afraid of the destruction of their own Atman, in the absence of the law of causality. So (causality) is assumed

for the sake of helping such people over their ignorance.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

Those who, being afraid of the absence of causality, admit the reality of their percepts and go away (from the path of non-duality) are not very greatly affected by the evil results of their beliefs. A little of the evil falls to their share. (43)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

Those who are afraid of the absence of causality, but rely on their perceptions of objects and on the performance of their prescribed duties, go away from the non-dual Atman; that is they admit duality. Such, though afraid of the absence of causality, still follow the path of righteousness with faith. As they pursue the way leading to discrimination, they are not overwhelmed by the evils resulting from the adoption of duality. But they do not attain perfection. Some evil however sticks to them, though it may be little, on account of their not having realised the truth, that is, non-duality.

## *Gaudapada's Karika*

An illusory elephant (either due to magic or seen in a dream) is said to exist, because it is perceived and as it can be made use of. Similarly any object (in the waking world) is also said to exist, because it is perceived and can be made use of. (44)

## *Sankara's Commentary*

(It may be objected) that on the twofold evidence of its being perceived

and its capacity of being made use of, a second object (apart from the perceiver) is said to exist. (To this we say) no. The twofold evidence of its being a percept and of its usefulness, is not enough to enable one to conclude that the object exists. If you ask how, we reply. An illusory elephant (or one seen in a dream) is perceived as an elephant and can be put to various uses, such as, being bound up, being used as a mount and in other ways. Though it has no real existence, it is said to exist. Similarly, objects second to the perceiver, are spoken of as existing. Therefore, its being perceived and its being made use of, cannot be considered as reasons for the real existence of duality (that is, of objects as apart from the perceiver).

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Consciousness, ever at peace, non-dual, unborn, unmoving and never a percept, appears as if born, as if moving and as if it is a percept. (45)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Here again is explained what the real "Sat" (Existence) is, which is the substratum for the superimposition of unreal birth, etc. Though devoid of birth, it appears as if it is born, as when we say that Devadatta is born. It looks as if it moves, as when we say that Devadatta goes. It appears as if it were an object possessing attributes, as when we say that Devadatta is born, is stout, is tall, etc. In reality, it is unborn, unmoving, is never an object with attributes, etc. What tallies with this description? It is Consciousness. Being devoid of birth, etc., it is ever at peace and non-dual.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Therefore, knowers of Brahman say that the mind and the Atmans

are not produced (born). Those who know this never fall into wrong knowledge. (46)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

For the reasons given above, the knowers of Brahman say that the mind and the Atmans are not born. The word 'Dharmas' (Atmans) is by courtesy used in the plural showing that though Atman is One, it may appear as many and different in accordance with the differences in the bodies. Those who know Consciousness as above described, as being devoid of birth, non-dual and of the essence of Atman, do not again fall into the deep ocean of ignorance, as they see nothing outside of themselves. This is in accordance with the scripture which says, "When one sees unity, where is illusion, and where is misery?"

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Just as motion imparted to a firebrand, makes it look straight, crooked, etc., so activity of Consciousness makes it look like perception, perceiver, etc. (47)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

The same true knowledge is further explained. In this world, the appearance of being straight or crooked, etc., is imparted to a firebrand by moving it about; so also the appearance of perception, perceiver, etc., that is, that of an object and the perceiver thereof. The production of this appearance is due to the activity of Consciousness. This activity is (not real, but due to) Avidya (ignorance). The inactive Consciousness has no movement as described above. "It is unborn and motionless."

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

There is no change (giving rise to an effect or change of form) and no

appearance of change in a firebrand left untouched. Similarly, there is no birth (result of change) or appearance of change in Consciousness which is left inactive. (48)

*Sankara's Commentary*

A firebrand left motionless does not show the birth of straightness, etc., or even the appearance of such. So Consciousness appears to move under the influence of Avidya (ignorance) and is motionless when Avidya disappears. Then the appearance of birth, etc., ceases and Consciousness remains unborn (unaffected) and motionless.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

The appearances of the firebrand in motion do not come from outside (the firebrand). When it is at rest, the (former) appearances, do not remain outside, nor enter the firebrand. (49)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Again, the appearances of the moving firebrand, such as being straight or crooked &c., do not take their birth outside the firebrand and then enter it. Also when it becomes motionless, the appearances (straight, crooked, etc.) do not go out of the firebrand and remain elsewhere. Nor can they be said to enter the firebrand (when it is at rest.)

*Gaudapada's Karika*

'They (the appearances) do not go out of the firebrand as they do not belong to the class 'substance.' The same holds good in the case of Consciousness, as appearances in both cases are alike. (50)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Again, the appearances of the firebrand do not go out of it, as they are

not substances like a house. Unsubstantiality means that they are unreal. To real things, entering (as well as coming out) is possible, but not to unreal things. This is exactly the case in the matter of the birth of Consciousness. Appearances are exactly alike in both cases. (That is to say, the so-called external objects are nothing but appearances.)

*Gaudapada's Karika*

When Consciousness is active, the appearances do not come from without (Consciousness). When it is at rest, the appearances do not go beyond, nor do they enter Consciousness. (51)

'They do not pass out, as they do not possess substantiality. As they are not subject to the relation of effect and cause, it is impossible to think of them (and describe them in words). (52)

*Sankara's Commentary*

How the two are similar, is clearly explained. Firebrand and Consciousness are similar in all respects, except that the speciality of Consciousness is that it is ever immutable. How the appearances of birth &c., come about in the unchanging Consciousness is now explained. In the absence of the relation of effect and cause, occurrences such as 'being born' and 'giving birth to' &c., are ever unthinkable and remain as non-entities. The meaning is that, just as in a firebrand, straightness &c., are non-existent, but the intellect sees them as mere appearances, similarly, in Consciousness, birth &c., are unreal, the appearances of the same to the intellect being false

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Social Value of Rituals

Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee develops a fine thesis on the social value of rituals in the 'Twentieth Century.' In all communities important crises in life, as conception, pregnancy, birth, initiation, marriage and death are associated with numerous social rites and observances. These rites only symbolically represent man's perennial interest in sex and reproduction. It is these impulses that build the home and the family. These rites and ceremonies soon come under the direction of the family priest and the women of the household, who are the real agents that control and conduct them in proper prescribed forms. When the family gets differentiated from the tribe and community, a great part of these rituals and observances become private in character.

### Resolves Conflicts and Helps Sublimation

In all these observances magical beliefs and rites pass for religion and all these have their origin to a large extent in man's interest and wonder at creation which strikes his imagination and makes him think of the deeper problems of life and its preservation. The deep desire in every one to find causal solutions for creation and many striking happenings in life, helps him to formulate magic as a possible hypothesis. Thus religion steps in as an ally of magic and we begin to get a series of socio-religious observances. Religion intervenes at every step in the social life of the community and resolves all inner conflicts. The ceremonies invoke a godhead or some supreme

power, from whom tribal law and morality are said to have originated. Sex and self-assertion are canalised into legitimate channels through the sublimating influence of these rituals and ceremonies. Dr. Mukerjee goes into a detailed analysis of the ceremonies of birth, initiation, marriage and death and tells us how rites and observances become very efficacious as forms of social control and guides of behaviour, "enabling the individual to secure an effective adaptation and the group its solidarity and unity of action when these tasks become peculiarly difficult in the vital crisis and momentous event of human existence."

Man seeks satisfaction in the social situations he has learned to command. The learned professor shows an organic relation between social observances and religious values. It is religion that makes an inner adjustment between man's basic instincts and his environments. Rituals contribute to the stabilisation and organisation of emotions, co-ordinating them, releasing tension and conflict and thus making them more durable by the introduction of "conscious purposes and ideals in the forms of myths and legends."

### Tendency to Revalue and Substitute

As man becomes critical and rational "he attempts to eliminate the licence from the marriage ritual, the obscenity from initiation or the horrid and disgusting aspects from mortuary observance." As more and more moral ideals leaven social conditions, we get a revaluation of



old rites and observances. With cultural progress there is a tendency to demand an intellectual type of satisfaction from rituals "and to depend upon science and the cultivation of aesthetic and social virtues and affections to control and orient the whole of social activity."

### **Strong Factor in Social Control**

The writer of this extremely readable article concludes his thesis by the following significant remarks. "Yet there cannot be any doubt that conservative influences of religion along with other means of social control are immensely strengthened by the aid and co-operation of the special arts and ritualistic activities and exercises, which provide a satisfying emotional experience of mutual responsiveness, the loss of which we all deplore in self-conscious societies."

### **Importance of a Golden Mean**

Critics of our social life will naturally find in any emphasis given to socio-religious forms by so eminent a sociologist and scholar like Dr. Mukerjee, a moral and scientific justification for those very institutions they want to see removed. What Dr. Mukerjee insists is not any relapse into barbarism and savagery. He has scientifically traced the growth of rituals from primitive conditions up to the present stage where they have become modes to express moral ideals through aesthetic forms. Rituals that are anti-social and help to disintegrate healthy associations of people should be mercilessly expurgated. What we should follow is the golden mean in these socio-religious questions and steer clear of the Scylla of rationalistic vandalism and the Charybdis of superstitious conservatism. If rituals are banished from hearths and homes they

are bound to appear as convocation ceremonies, levies and durbars. There is an organic need for ritualistic expression and any violence done to religion, with which ritualistic life is so closely related, would only disorganise further our present order of society, giving rise in its turn to unhealthy living and consequently an abnormal social psyche. Great psychologists like Dr. Jung lament the absence of the steadying power of a religious faith in our modern hysterical social life.

### **All not Rationalists and Philosophers**

Rationalists and philosophers may not need a religious outlook or ritualistic forms. But they have no right to unsettle the ordinary man's faith in the social life of his community. The soul of a nation is expressed through its religion and conventions of society. If we are finding at any time the symptoms of decline in existing conditions of life as seen through these rituals, to re-educate the mass mind should be the healthy endeavour of honest well-wishers. Our reformers should beware that in trying to kill the mosquito on the animal's back they should never inadvertently beat the life out of the animal. There should be a common criterion to know which are the decadent forms that should be removed and which can profitably be retained. Every movement of life that helps to unfold the self of man, either through the widening of his mental life or deepening of moral values, making men more thoughtful and generous, less anti-social, helping them to live up to high levels of consciousness, should be encouraged. And those forms and conventions that would naturally remain as receptacles of the progress should be retained. There is an unbroken continuity in

the growth of these rituals and their varied adaptations to men's changed outlook on life. There must be a progressive ideal expressing itself in society, and in India where that Ideal is Immanent and at the same time Transcendental, religion and forms of ritual can only be vehicles of a higher expression. There may be people who have outgrown these needs as they develop a transcendental outlook. But there are equally

large masses to whom the Immanent Ideal appeals; and to them forms and rituals carry some meaning. We shall be completely discounting the psychology of the mass-mind if we carry on a tirade against religion or ritualism. The article of Dr. Mukerjee comes as a refreshing contrast to the extremely iconoclastic views expressed by Dr. R. P. Paranjpye in his recent utterances from the press and the platform.

## OBITUARY NOTES

### Swami Nischayananda

With deep sorrow we record the passing away of Swami Nischayananda on the 22nd October at Kankhal. For the past five months the Swami had been suffering from liver complaints brought on by privation and austere habits. The end was really enviable. Shortly after noon he sent for the inmates of the Ashrama and the guest house, and in their presence left his mortal garb while sitting in meditation. The remains were carried in a procession which was over two miles long and in which the residents of the locality and representatives of the Ashramas at Kankhal, Haridwar and Hrishikesh took part. The Harijans, whom he had long served with utmost love, were all in tears and organised a separate procession. After due religious rites the body was floated before the Nildhara in the Ganges.

The Swami was a Maharashtri by birth and was a Subedar in the Indian army. The sturdiness of a soldier's life did not kill in him the desire to know God and to serve humanity. When Swami Vivekananda returned to India after his success in the West, Nischayananda wanted to place himself at his feet, and feigned that he was of unsound mind in order to get discharged from the army. He was kept under observation for some time and he had to undergo the usual tests, including icing of the head before he could obtain his discharge. He met Swami Vive-

kananda at Madras and proceeded to Belur Math where he was initiated into Sannyas by the Swamiji. He remained there till the passing away of his Guru.

Nischayananda then left for Kankhal. His life of service to humanity began and ended at Kankhal. He was the right hand of Swami Kalyanananda, Secretary of the R. K. Mission Sevashram there. They lived for many years in a hut underneath a mango tree at the site where the Sevashram now stands. Nischayananda got the nickname of Bhangi Sadhus as he visited the huts of sweepers and other low class people of the locality in order to treat and nurse them during their illness. For doing this kind of service he was refused alms by the people of the place; and for five years he had daily to go to Hrishikesh, a distance of 15 miles, where he treated the Sadhus and other helpless people as well as begged his meal. His disciplined and sturdy life in the army sustained him throughout. Once Mohant Dhanraj Giri of Kailas Math, Hrishikesh, took the Sadhus to task for calling him Bhangi Sadhu, highly eulogised his selfless services in their presence and gave him a prominent seat at dinner. This event dwindled the opposition and he began to be loved and respected by all. The Sevashram at Kankhal is the result of his devoted service to the poor and the needy. Duty was so sweet to him that he

knew no holidays and he was ready at all hours to treat and nurse the patients. He was an embodiment of the spirit of Seva. May his soul rest in Peace!

**Dr. M. S. Krishnamurthi,  
Mylapore**

WITH great regret we also announce the passing away of Dr. M. S. Krishnamurthi, M. B. & C. M., F. R. I.P.H. (Lond.) at his residence in Mylapore on 2nd November, at the ripe old age of sixty-seven. He began his career as an Asst. Surgeon of the Madras Civil Medical Department in 1895. During the plague epidemic in Vaniampady and Bellary he worked as plague-officer and was rewarded with a gold medal in recognition of his services. Later he was selected by Col. King as his first personal assistant. In 1903 he became Sanitary Commissioner of Travancore and was praised for "his steady, successful and silent administration." He retired in 1922, but continued to be very active down to the day of his death. He used to say that he would "die in harness," and

he literally carried it out. From the middle of 1928, in the midst of numerous activities, he found time to be the honorary doctor in charge of our Charitable Dispensary here in Mylapore. As a result of his efficient treatment the popularity of the institution steadily rose, and the number of patients increased from 18,222 in 1928 to 54,567 in 1930. In the beginning of 1931 Dr. Krishnamurthi left and was succeeded by Dr. G. S. Katre, M. B. & B. S., who continues in charge to this day. But a few months back, Dr. Krishnamurthi's zeal for service brought him again to our institution, where he sat for hours together and examined patients and prescribed for them even on the morning of the 2nd. Our Doctor and Swamis attended on him to the last. Dr. Krishnamurthi was conscious throughout, and he died in the "midst of action." He leaves behind an only son, four daughters and a large circle of friends, including ourselves, and thousands of poor patients whom he treated in our institution, to mourn his loss. May he attain eternal Peace!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (With the Commentary of Sri Sankaracharya): Translated by Swami Madhavananda: Published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas. Price Rs. 6.*

We welcome with great joy this new addition to the translation of Hindu religious and philosophical literature. At a time when Indian thought in general,—and Vedanta in particular—is attracting the attention of scholars and thinkers of the West as well as of the East, and the demand is growing day by day for authoritative renderings of original Sanskrit texts, the book under review will be eagerly received by all serious students of Indian philosophy who have not got sufficient knowledge of Sanskrit to go to the original sources. The present volume does constitute an important land-

mark in the history of Oriental publications beginning from Thibaut's translation of Sankara's Vedanta Sutra Bhashya in the Sacred Books of the East series.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is a veritable epitome of all varieties of religious and philosophical ideas. Indian philosophical genius is at its best in this work. The vigour and freshness of its thoughts and the intellectual acumen of its many thinkers, among whom are found also women, mark it out, as the learned Prof. Kuppuswamy Sastri, M.A., I.E.S., writes in the Introduction, as the "greatest of the Upanishads." To write a fitting commentary on such a work was part of the glorious life-work of Acharya Sankara. His masterly achievement lies in having constructed an even pathway also through the veritable

"forest of ideas", which the Brihadaranyaka is.

The present work completes and crowns the series of translations of Sankara's Bhashyas on the Upanishads. Those who had the good fortune to be introduced to the Upanishads and Sankara's Bhashyas thereon through Dr. Ganganath Jha's translations in Mr. V. C. Seshachari's series, must have felt not a little disappointed to find the Brihadaranyaka missing among them. Swami Madhavanandaji's book comes, therefore, as an immensely valuable contribution to the group of translations of the Acharya's commentaries.

One of the praiseworthy features of this translation is that lengthy discussions have been split up and arranged into paragraphs according to topics. This is sure to help the reader in following up the thread of the arguments. The translator has also taken infinite pains to trace the various quotations found scattered throughout the Bhashya. Some still remain untraced, but he hopes that in the next

edition it might be possible to trace most of the rest, if not all.

The value of the volume is enhanced by a learned Introduction from such an eminent scholar as Prof. S. Kuppuswamy Sastri of Madras. The Introduction seeks to analyse the whole Upanishad according to the nature of the topics dealt with in the six chapters comprising the Upadisa, Upapatthi and Upasana of the Brahman-Atman Identity which, in the view of Sankara, is the purpose of all the Vedantas.

The translator has furnished a very valuable Index and a short note explaining the position of importance the Brihadaranyaka holds in Vedic literature. Simplicity of language and lucidity of expression are special features of Swami Madhavananda's writings; and by this volume he has earned the gratitude of all students of Indian thought, both in India and abroad.

The printing and get-up are excellent and on a level with the other publications of the Advaita Ashram.

S.R.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Gnanaswarananda in India

Swami Gnanaswarananda, President of the Vedanta Centre, Chicago, landed in Bombay in the first week of August 1934. The Swami left for America in 1927, and after a short stay in the Vedanta Centre of New York, organised the work in the city of Chicago. Being possessed of talents in many fields of activity, the Swami has been able to impress many with the message that India has to deliver to the West.

In India the Swami had a very crowded programme. He visited many of the important centres of the Mission such as Benares, Patna, Deoghar, Belur-Calcutta group, Dacca, Sargachi, Madras, Bangalore, Mysore, and Ootacamund. In addition to famous places of pilgrimage like Kanya Kumari, he

went also to all places of historical or architectural interest, and took long rolls of movie photographs. Somnathpur in the South specially delighted him. Being a good musician himself, he has been able to organise a school of Indian music in the very heart of Chicago; and he was carrying with him this time a new stringed instrument to add to the many already used by his students. The music of the South appealed to him very much, and in loving memory of some songs he heard from Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer, one of the experts of the present day, the Swami took with him a gramophone record of one of his favourite pieces, to make a beginning.

Wherever he went, the Swami charmed all by his marvellous powers of conversation. His speeches were very impressive and were always interspersed

ed with beautiful stories showing in an unforgettable manner the strong points in the culture of the East or West. Everywhere he stressed the fact that people in the West, even boys of the school-going age, had "wonderful efficiency, neatness and a methodical way of doing things." The story of two American boys, George and Stevenson was a favourite with him. These boys, whose parents were students attending the Swami's classes, cherished a desire to drive to the woods in an automobile; and they carried it out in a most thoroughly heroic and "practical" manner. They calmly went out job-hunting and earned a few Dollars for every week of hard labour. With the money thus got they purchased an old junk, learned motor mechanics in a workshop as apprentices and afterwards repaired their machine, making it fit for the road. In this "new" car, they finally satisfied their long-cherished desire, and enjoyed their holidays in a most real sense. And they were boys!

In this way all the qualities by which the West has acquired skill and efficiency he held up before his audiences. What the people there require is peace and poise, the perfection of the inner life. Could life be lived in a better way? If so, how? Herein, said the Swami, lay India's opportunity. If India's young men and women could inhibit their own culture properly, regulate their lives and go about doing things in the efficient and neat manner characteristic of the West at present, India would be able to do signal service to the West and supply what is lacking there, namely control of the inner man. By such a policy of give-and-take alone, would it be possible to prepare the ground for the perfection of the future.

Leaving India proper, the Swami crossed to Ceylon, visited the Mission Centres as well as various places of interest there, and sailed for the West by the middle of October.

### **R. K. M. Sevashrama, Kankhal**

The Sevashrama has now completed 34 years. From every part of British

India and the Native States, patients of all castes and creeds found admittance and proper treatment. During the year under review the total number treated in the indoor section was 870 and in the outdoor 16,655. Of the former 806 were cured and discharged. Medical aid, diet, clothings and other necessary things were also supplied to 447 patients outside. The Night School, started in 1913, is still being conducted in the verandah of the outdoor Dispensary, undergoing great disadvantages during the rains or winter. The pressing need is for a building of its own, at an estimated cost of Rs. 5,000. Other urgent needs of the Sevashrama are: 1. Workers' quarters, a building with four rooms and two verandahs, at a cost of about Rs. 8,000. 2. Guest house. Over Rs. 2,000 still to be subscribed to complete the work already begun. 3. Rest house for friends and relatives of patients, costing about Rs. 5,000. 4. A temple has been constructed for the benefit of the workers and spiritually minded people, drawing a temporary loan, which has soon to be repaid. 5. Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the work. Out of the 66 beds in the indoor section, only 12 have been provided for. Funds are required also for the Ayurvedic department. The management hopes to remove these needs with the co-operation of the generous public.

The appeal coming from Hrishikesh, 15 miles away from Kankhal, to start a branch Sevashram there, remains unanswered. The management trusts that proper funds will be forthcoming to commence this much-needed work.

### **R. K. M. Students' Home, Mylapore**

The Home's 29th Annual Report shows that it has been able to make notable improvements during the year.

Through the kind assistance of Janab C. Abdul Hakim Sahab Bahadur, the well-known philanthropist of South India, the necessary materials for a separate dormitory for the students of the Industrial school were received. Some addition was also made to the staff quarters. The total number of boys on the rolls was 138. 17 of these

were studying in the various Colleges. The results of the public examinations were satisfactory, four out of four passing in the Intermediate and 18 out of 19 in the School Final. Two completed the final year in Mechanical Engineering. The social service aspect of boys' activities, among others, received special attention and numerous slides were prepared to help lantern lectures, etc. That the Industrial section was able to undertake the construction of an aerodrome at Chettinad shows the possibilities of the Home in that line.

A Series of Musical Concerts was given in aid of the Home by the most prominent musicians of South India under the patronage of Their Highnesses the Maharajah and the Junior Maharajah of Travancore. The net proceeds from the various places amounted to nearly Rs. 3,000. In appreciation of the work of the Home H. II. the Maharajah himself gave a generous donation of Rs. 2,500. The Maharajah of Jeypore contributed Rs. 1,000. The Madras Secretariat Party was able to collect through its performances Rs. 15,352-6-0 and raise the total of their endowment to nearly two and a quarter lakhs. The total receipts for general maintenance amounted to Rs. 36,578-13-0; yet there was a deficit of Rs. 1,727. It is hoped that with increased support from the public, the Home will be able to balance its receipts and expenses, and carry on its noble work among the students.

The Mambalam Branch School has been able to open Form IV. It is hoped that with the help of the Govt., and the public it will be possible to begin the construction of a spacious building and thus take the first step towards the permanency of its educational activities.

### **R. K. Mission Ashram, Cawnpore**

The Ashram is the spiritual centre from which diverse educational and philanthropic activities are carried on. There is a worship room where prayer and Bhajan are regularly conducted.

Classes are also held, where scriptures are read and expounded.

*Educational activities:* (a) Sarada Vidyapith, a middle school training over a hundred boys according to the curricula of the High School and Intermediate Board. (b) Vivokananda Vidyalyaya and Vidyamandir, two schools in rural areas giving education to about 120 village boys. (c) Vivokananda Vidyapith, established in 1924, meant specially for depressed classes. The students are mainly Harijans. Besides the day school, night classes are also held for adults. (d) Shivananda Labour School, conducted mainly by college students in the evening. (e) Brahmananda Students' Home with provision up to forty inmates. There are students from nearly all provinces, ranging from M. A. classes down to the very primary. (f) An efficient Scout Corps. (g) Two small but useful libraries and (h) A debating society for Ashram students, bringing out an illustrated manuscript magazine in vernacular.

*Social and Philanthropic:* (a) R. K. Seva Sadan with outdoor and indoor sections, working under efficient doctors. During the last two and a half years the outdoor section treated 74,359 cases and the indoor admitted 50. (b) Medical relief, lantern lectures, etc., in villages. The ambulance corps of the Scouts often gave first aid. (c) Sunday collections by Ashram students and their friends, distributed to deserving poor people. (d) Relief in times of need, e.g., in the Relief hospital after Cawnpore riots and after Burhampore Fire. (e) Supervision of an asylum for the old and disabled, with accommodation for 30.

The Ashram runs, in addition, a well-equipped Gymnasium which has aroused enthusiasm among the students and young men of the city, a Vyayamshala specially for Harijans and a music association.

The Ashram has no building of its own and the whole activity is carried on in rented houses. The management hopes benevolent souls will contribute liberally and remove this great handicap to the expansion and growth of the institution.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman,"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

JANUARY, 1935

[No. 9

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

वाङ्मायत्तं क्षत्रियैर्मनिवानां लोकश्रेष्ठं धर्ममासेवमानैः ।

सर्वे धर्मा सोपधर्मास्त्रियाणां गङ्गो धर्मादिति वेदात् शृणोमि ॥

यथा राजन् हरितपदे पदानि संलीयन्ते सर्वसत्त्वोद्भवानि ।

एवं धर्मान् राजधर्मेषु सर्वान् सदाविस्थं सम्प्रलीनान्विबोध ॥

अल्पाश्रयानल्पफलान् वदन्ति धर्मानिन्यान् धर्मविदो मनुष्याः ।

महाश्रयं बहुकल्याणरूपं चात्र धर्मं नेतरं प्राहुरार्याः ॥

Amongst men, the highest duties are those which are practised by the warrior class. The whole world is subject to the might of their arms. All the duties, principal and subordinate, of the three other orders of society are dependent (for their proper observance) upon the duties of the Kshatriyas. The Vedas have declared this.

Know that as the footprints of all other animals are engulfed in that of the elephant, even so all the duties of the other orders, under every circumstance, are engulfed in those of the Kshatriyas.

Men conversant with scripture say that the duties of the three other orders afford small relief or protection and produce scanty merit. The duties of the warrior class, on the other hand, declare the learned, afford great relief and are productive of great merit.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. LXIII, 24-26)

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*Why it is difficult for learned and wealthy men to recognise the Master's greatness.*

SUCH being the nature of the Master, to correctly understand him is extremely difficult for ordinary men, and still more so for those who are proud of their wealth or education. Unaccustomed to hear straightforward remarks,—because of their exalted position and because of their wealth and honour—mostly they happen to lose the attitude of toleration towards such plain speaking. There is nothing strange if such people consider the Master to be unmannerly, lunatic or egoistic. Hence we are all the more surprised to see the deep love and respect that Rani Rasmani and Mathur Babu had for the Master. It seems, through the grace of God, they were highly fortunate, not only in being able to maintain all along their love for the Master unabated, but also, as their acquaintance with the Divine Preceptor in the Master grew day by day, in being able ultimately to surrender themselves whole-heartedly to his feet. Otherwise it would never have been easy for them to keep up this attitude of loving regard towards the Master at the cost of all their egotism, and in spite of repeated humiliation by him. It is to be remembered how Sri Ramakrishna completely fasted on the very day of the opening ceremony

of the temple, unwilling to accept food from a Sudra, although the food had been offered to the Divine Mother and his own elder brother was the priest. Later, too, for some time he persisted in cooking his food himself on the river bank, for the same reason. Not only that. Although Mathur Babu repeatedly attempted to meet him, the Master felt a great scruple even to speak to him as he knew Mathur to be a “worldly-minded” man. And still later, when again and again earnest requests came to him to accept the post of chief priest, he gave repeatedly his flat refusal.

*Mathur notices the Master's state of God-intoxication after marriage and feels attracted towards him. Others' opinions regarding the Master.*

The Master's marriage is now over and he is in the full bloom of youth. After his marriage he has returned to Dakshineswar and is engaged in worshipping the Divine Mother. Almost simultaneously with it, his intense love of God has made him almost insane in the popular sense. Sometimes unable to remain without God-vision he rolls on the ground and, rubbing his face against the earth, weeps profusely for the Divine Mother. This goes to such an extent that people throng around him and remark sympathetically, ‘Alas, the man must have got some



terrible disease. People writhe like this when suffering from colic pain.' Or again, at the time of worship perhaps he heaps up all the flowers on his own head and remains motionless for a long time ! Or, at times mad with fervour he goes on singing hymns composed by devout poets. Otherwise, when in his normal mood, he behaves quite properly, showing proper respect for the superiors and in every other way, as he used to do before. But through his meditations on the Divine Mother, when the Master is possessed with that ecstatic mood,—and this happens not once or twice in a day, nor with a little intensity,—he loses all external consciousness, neither listening to any one nor making any response whatever. But even at this stage people do find a sweet trait in this divine character. Even then if any one requests him to sing devotional songs, for his satisfaction, the Master at once begins to sing with his sweet voice and becomes wholly absorbed in the theme of the song.

Already the mean-minded employees of the lower rank as well as the chief manager of the temple have reported to Rani Rasmani and Mathur Babu about the violation of formalities by the Master in course of worship. 'The junior \* Bhattacharya,' they have told, 'is spoiling everything. The worship of the Divine Mother is not being done at

all. For, how can the Mother accept the offerings while such irregularities are going on?' But these and other complaints were all to no effect. For Mathur Babu personally would occasionally give surprise visits to the temple without previous intimation to any one and observe from a distance the Master's devotional attitude and his childlike familiar behaviour with the Divine Mother; and with tears of devotion in his eyes he ordered the employees not to interfere with the junior Bhattacharya in any way, whatever the latter might be doing. They were asked only to report to Mathur Babu whenever necessary and then act according to his instructions.

Rani Rasmani too would visit the temple now and then; and every time she would come she would highly appreciate the tasteful decoration of the holy image and the beautiful songs sung by the Master. So much so that whenever she would come to the temple, the 'junior Bhattacharya' would be sent for and requested to sing the praise of the Divine Mother. The Master too would entirely forget his environments in the course of his songs and think that the Divine Mother Herself was his only audience.

Days roll by thus, one after another; and as in the vast world of the universe, so also in the little world of the temple at Dakshineswar, each person remains busy with his own affairs; and the little time they can spare from their worldly

---

\* 'Bhattacharya' is a term of respect. The Master was so called as his elder brother was styled 'the senior Bhattacharya.'

duties and selfish ends, they spend with much delight in discussing the defects of others or in similar saucy topics. Who cares therefore what changes are going on in the junior Bhattacharya through his love of God? 'The fellow is stark mad. Somehow he has fallen into the favour of the employer. That is why his post is still continuing. But how long can it go on in this way? Some day he will happen to

do some serious mischief and will be immediately driven away. Inscrutable are the ways of rich men. There is no knowing when they will be pleased or displeased. It takes no time for them to become either.' Such are the only remarks that are occasionally made by the temple-employees. That is all. Hriday, the Master's nephew and attendant, has also come by this time to stay in the temple.

## TYPES OF RESPONSE IN SPIRITUAL LIFE—II

**P**EOPLE differ from one another very considerably with regard to the defects of their personality, and consequently in the nature and the order of the responses which they have to master for achieving freedom from them. Religion, if it is to serve the purpose of all, has thus to point out models of various qualities so that sincere aspirants can revolve them in their minds till new and vigorous ideas filter into every part of their being and come out as prompt and righteous action. Just as a sense of happiness manifests itself simultaneously as a beaming smile on the face, why should not a bold, original and constructive idea also transmit its powerful impulses continuously to all parts of the responding mechanism of the man, and spur him on into mighty efforts to accomplish it in "action"?

### Where Doubt and Fear Prevail

What prevents such a ready transmission is, in most cases, an

unhealthy fear of the obstacles that might present themselves and create a disaster in place of success. Such people have naturally to look upon the Lord as a breaker of obstacles, as a Vighnesa, as long as they are not able to fill themselves with the opposite idea that He is pre-eminently a giver of success. Many, however, may feel doubtful whether natural forces would not prove too strong for their limited human energies. Their defective outlook can be remedied only by a model in which the Lord appears as the creator and ruler of the elements, as Bhutesa, in addition to His being a lover of his devotees.

Others may be upset by the fact that organised activities of the wicked-minded have from time immemorial wrought havoc among the followers of the path of virtue. And it might appear to them that humanity has not undergone any substantial evolution during all the long centuries through

which it has passed, since vice and misery do yet remain as rampant as ever before. Those who interpret facts in this manner and get into a gloomy and pessimistic attitude have to lift themselves out of it with the aid of a model which can drive into them the conviction that the Lord is invariably a Destroyer and the wielder of the rod of chastisement. They would require the acceptance of a God who has not merely created the world and left it to shift for itself, but who has often, and will in future too, "come down" among men and protect virtue and its votaries as often as vice rears up its head like a hooded serpent ready to strike.

### To Fan Creative Spark into Flame

In the case of many, doubt and fear may not be so prominent as a desire to excel, to possess and to conquer in a manner consistent with virtue.<sup>1</sup> Their evolution becomes smooth and easy only if they can conceive of the Deity as the fountain-head of all creative endeavour. Their model must be an all-gracious Being whose touch lets in a stream of original ideas and leads to remarkable achievements in the realm of literature and music and all the other fine arts. Their Deity must be able to confer success in research, in all productive concerns and in leading an auspicious and prosperous life. As the heart expands, the truly pious yearn for the

capacity to make all the weary and sorrow-laden their own. Wealth, influence and every attainment, intellectual and spiritual, they wish to have in increasing measure so that poverty, illiteracy and misery in general can be conquered, and wisdom and inner peace enabled to fill up all hollows wherever met with. Such heroic natures require a model of self-sacrifice combined with learning, prosperity and auspiciousness.

### For Direct Manipulation of Inner Forces

There are, however, sections of people whose gaze is fixed more naturally on their own selves and who may not derive satisfaction by conceiving of any Divinity that shapes their ends and rough-hews them from outside. To them the body appears like a car, driven hither and thither by an as yet unknown manipulation of their inherited and acquired tendencies and desires. They are eager to know the secret of this manipulation and bring it under definite control. The Deity can appeal to them only in the capacity of their own higher self, acting from within as the Master of the car or as the Teacher<sup>2</sup> of the science of driving,—not merely their own cars but all other vehicles as well.

Some, again, have no liking for any of these views of a Personal Deity but have absorbing interest in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. अमोघविद्भो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।  
(Ita.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. आत्मानं रयिन् विद्धि etc. of Kathopanishad and स एष प्रवेषामपि गुरुः of Yoga Sutra.

the play of forces in their theoretically separate body and mind. To them it looks as if there is only a simple question of food and its eater, of the supply of energy through meat and drink *and ideas*, and its expenditure as thoughts which do not stop with the mind alone, but penetrate all obstacles like hesitation or timidity and reach their due plane of physical action with the least possible delay. Their model has necessarily to be Self-regulating Force or Energy and their method judicious exercises in "Pranayama." Some stress the evolutionary aspect of this Force, and their interest lies only in grasping the goal towards which it leads, or to express it in a new way, to find out the constant pressure under which life and its varied activities are carried on. Thinkers of the West concluded that the pleasure principle and the power principle are roughly the basic factors in the mental evolution of any individual. Ancient Indian thinkers thought of the basic principle rather as a three-fold one, as an irresistible urge for realising Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. In this way Brahman appeals to some; and they have to adopt suitable measures to change their responses in the light of this all-comprehensive ideal.

### **Variety to meet All Needs**

The religions of the world have thus laid down means to remove defects in character and outlook by accepting and "revolving" in the mind one or more of these models. Indian tradition has surpassed all

others by providing an exhaustive scheme. Its Shastras do appear contradictory in the eyes of those who like careering about the extensive tracts of theories but have not seriously settled down to grapple with the mind and elevate it to a harmonised state. A complete surgical set must necessarily contain instruments which seem to serve contradictory purposes, as for example, a pair of scissors to *cut* and some needles and thread to *stitch*. But yet, even a layman does not think of damning surgical science as self-contradictory and alleging that it often makes mistakes in cutting open bodies but that it has provision for undoing the mischief by promptly stitching up the parts again. Rather, even the layman realises that both cutting and stitching are essential for a complete cure in certain cases. Similarly, for mental and spiritual health, different processes, different models and different methods of dealing with the responding apparatus are required; and the Shastras have therefore to keep an astonishing variety of Upasanas to meet all situations. From the standpoint of mental surgery, this variety happens to be a supreme advantage, and never a defect as it is sometimes proclaimed to be by advocates of "single methods."

But why is it that in spite of such facilities, we find only very few persons attaining to spiritual eminence in each generation? "It is only one in thousand," says the Gita, "that seriously takes up spiri-

tual culture; and out of them, again, it is only one out of every thousand that succeeds in realising the Lord." This seems to be quite true in the case of grown-up people down to the present day. But evidently almost every one practises faithfully for a fairly long period the methods suggested by the creed into which he finds himself born. Enthusiasm flags, and eventually evaporates only when the reasoning faculty matures and no *tangible* results are experienced in spite of scrupulous adherence to the methods prescribed.

### Fruits to be Expected

It is useless to argue that the scriptures stress implicit obedience irrespective of the fruits that accrue. For fruits are certainly to be desired; only not *all* fruits. In essence, the Kingdom of Heaven, or Perfection or Salvation is also no less than a fruit; it follows as a consequence of removing the obstacles that prevented its realisation. And scripture itself, when it has to deal with the problem in a scientific spirit, points out that certain signs are sure to come to the person who adopts the correct attitude.

Says the Swetaswatara Upanishad that "forms" like snowfall, smoke, sun, wind, fire, firefly, lightning, crystal and moon come before, and gradually manifest the Brahman while practising Yoga. It also points out that the very first signs of entering the correct path of Yogic discipline are lightness, health, non-covetousness, clearness

of complexion, a beautiful voice, an agreeable odour in the body and scantiness of all excretions.<sup>3</sup>

Leaving aside landmarks in mystical training, it is clear that a greater clinging to virtue, greater cheerfulness, resourcefulness, capacity to feel for others and bear one's own cross in life, are fruits which each one ought to desire intensely. Nay, if any practice is found progressively to bring their opposites, one has to conclude that there is something radically wrong in the mental reactions or that the method followed is quite unsuited to the needs of the particular individual. The remedy then is to change the model taken up or to note the flaws in the responses and set them right. There are also schools of discipline which clearly declare the acquisition of these very virtues to be their basic exercise in mental training.<sup>4</sup>

### When and Why Mechanical

We often come across persons who are advanced in years and have attained eminence in various walks

3. नीहारधूमाकर्कानिलानलानां  
सद्योतविद्युत्-स्फटिक-शशिनाम् ।  
एतानि रूपाणि पुरःसर्गाणि  
ब्रह्मस्यभिव्यक्तिकराणि योगे ॥  
लघुत्वमागम्यमलोलुपत्वं  
वर्णप्रसादः स्वस्सौष्ठवश्च ।  
गन्धः शुभो मूलपुरीषमल्पः  
योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रयत्नां वदन्ति ॥

(11 & 13)

4. Cf. मैत्री, करुणा, मुदिता etc. अहिंसा,  
सत्यं etc. शौचं, संतोषः etc. of Yoga  
Sutras.

of life, but who yet carry with them intact many childish fancies and reactions. Some literally "cannot stand a gaping pig" or frog, or cannot venture into the dark or arrange their dress and other articles without a nurse-substitute, who in the case of most men turns out to be the wife! In spiritual matters also, —and perhaps with less chance of being detected—people get into fixations, and they continue practices which they ought to have long outgrown. The result is that their observances become mechanical and lifeless; and in due course they are troubled by the question whether religious life itself is not after all a wild goose chase. It is not rituals alone that become mechanical. Contact of virtuous men, too, if not maintained with an ever open, vigilant mind, loses its value for the seeker after a time and what is worse, the charms imagined from a distance appear to him to have been non-existent all along. Meditation is supposed to be a higher exercise than ritualistic worship, but even this becomes mechanical when the aspirant fails to make judicious and persistent attempts to reach higher states of awareness.

### Effect on Communities

Inertia is a subtle evil. It does not leave off a man simply because he has once begun to move forward. It reappears in various forms; and unless he frequently takes his bearings and watches the responses of his mind at different stages and to different surroundings, he is likely

to be deluded into the belief that he is progressing whereas in reality he may be standing still and getting fossilised, or imperceptibly sinking back into the planes previously covered. When this disease overtakes an entire community, each member looks complacently at the others and, seeing the mechanical observance of formal religion, makes a wrong inference that they are all following the correct path and are beyond the need for reform. They are the people of "childish fixations" mentioned here and there in the Upanishads. They fail to perceive the frail nature of a raft of rituals and the like, when stuck up to in an immoderate measure. Immersed variously in ignorance, (अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमानाः), these children in the spiritual field consider themselves wise and of accomplished aims (स्वयं धीमः परिदत्तं मन्यमानाः, वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति ज्ञानाः). They remain perfectly unaware of the fall that awaits them after the enjoyment of a few subtle experiences.

### Resulting in Timidity

Often too the aspirant imagines that he is practising a particular response when he is actually doing just the opposite. God as a rewarder of virtue brings along with it simultaneously the idea of God as a chastiser of sins of commission and omission. For a time the devotee may succeed in fingering his nerves and playing on them the welcome notes that he would be blessed with grace. But he can also be unconscious of the relaxed tension of his

strings and be producing discordant notes in an absent-minded mood. He can imperceptibly slide into the conviction that for some of his actions, branded as sinful by his elders and priests, he is sure to receive the just share of punishment. In this manner, while the worshipper apparently takes up an excellent model and "prays" in an orthodox pattern, he may in reality be carrying on a practice of *timidity* or *despair* or paralysing *fear*, and nothing more! Every aspirant should know when and how to eliminate the idea of avoiding punishment from among the motives for spiritual life, and to replace it temporarily, if need be, by a desire for heavenly rewards, but permanently by a consuming passion for Truth, Justice, Righteousness, Realisation of Oneness and the like.

### Case of Armed Deities

The danger is especially great in the case of the worshippers of "Hindu" gods. They are all armed gods. All the weapons in use among human beings for the destruction of their enemies have been assigned to the deities, who are conceived of as having numerous hands for wielding them to advantage. As if this is not enough, celestial weapons are thought of, which can penetrate human defences and, after finishing their work, return to the hands of the wielder for a fresh offensive. Worship of grim-faced deities of this type, symbolising the destruction of the wicked-minded,—rather of their wickedness—has undoubtedly played an important part in

rousing the military instincts of our people at various stages of their long history. What greater spur can there be to warlike men than the vivid picture of the celestially armed Deity Himself (or Herself) marching ahead and ordering them, divine children, to advance, sack, crush and conquer? With the Lord as the driver of our war-chariot, pointing out to us severally the heroes arrayed against us, and reducing the span of their lives by His very glance, परं सैनिकायुद्धं हतवति, what timid one amongst us would not muster courage, be a mere instrument for His divine purposes and achieve undying renown in the field of battle? What Perseus felt within him when he donned on Athene's sword and winged sandals, or King Arthur of Round Table fame his Excalibur, or the mighty Ravana of the Ramayana his irresistible Chandrahasta, warlike votaries of these deities armed to the teeth ought naturally to have felt; and ought still to feel if the mental response at the time of worship is correct. But though the temples are there, the rituals performed, the stories read, expounded and seen "expressed" upon the stage, these votaries have lost their efficiency, turned slavish and come to be looked down upon as "non-martial"! The followers of those hosts of gods who have promised to "come down" among men and uphold the cause of virtue by exterminating the wicked, have miserably lost the use of their arms. And yet the worship goes on as tradition has laid it down!

### Sense of Responsibility

Let us venture an explanation,—out of many that might be forthcoming—from the standpoint of psychology. It is possible that while meditating upon those deities we got into the wrong attitude that *our function was over with it*, and that there was no need for us to lift a little finger ourselves in our own defence and interests, since the deities were omniscient and had the responsibility to do all that was required by the situation. We perhaps unwittingly persisted in the wrong response, regarding the deities as convenient pegs to hang all our armour on, not for sanctifying it and taking it back with redoubled enthusiasm and martial spirit, but to deposit it there for ever, and to be merely admiring spectators gazing from a distance! At a stage, then, our fancied meditations must have strayed into the direction of shrinking and shirking. We became timid *in spite of* the grandeur of our divine models.

Conclusions like this are risky; yet let us venture a little further. Jesus came to preach a gospel of love; and although he once took up a whip and chastised the money-changers and others who defiled the atmosphere of the place of worship, his main teachings were to forgive the enemies, show the other cheek when one was struck upon, and to “put up” the sword at all costs. He himself set the model for all time by “suffering” his enemies to capture him, torture him and finally hang him up on the cross, challenging

him to save himself if, as he used to tell, he was really divine. This seems to be just the opposite of what any ‘Hindu’ God would have done or taught or tolerated. Yet mark what the followers of this unarmed and disarming Lord have, as nations, come to possess. There is no Christian nation which is not organised on a military basis or would at present care to reduce its fighting equipments, however much it may have begun to feel the difficulties and dangers of continuing this race for armaments! The Buddha too preached Ahimsa. Yet it is interesting how Buddhist Japan has become efficient in the methods of modern warfare, and by sheer merit emerged as a Power to be reckoned with in World Politics.

### Possible Explanations

We may find answers by telling that those who are engaged in the work of governing in any country are not the people who follow strictly the letter and spirit of the gospels. Sainly Christians, Buddhists and other religionists have ever responded, and do yet respond to their spiritual models in a manner which their respective Masters themselves would approve of. Policies are on the other hand shaped by those who are not so advanced, and this accounts for the wide gulf between the theories of the gospels and the results of their practice in daily life. Applying the same reasoning, it may also be pointed out that many a devotee of the armed deities has achieved military glories, or succeeded in



imbibing universal love after uprooting his aggressiveness by symbolical meditations,—both being legitimate fruits of such Upasana.

We are, however, not concerned with the best specimens of each sect. They know the principles of religious life, whatever models are taken up and whatever method is adopted. They have in fact transcended both models and methods. But we are concerned with the vast majority of those who attempt spiritual life, get into wrong responses and as a result lose all faith

after a time, developing into non-believers or weaklings, or who sometimes, by the principle of opposite responses, evolve into bold, efficient and even *over-military types*. A passive God *can* evoke a reaction of aggressiveness, while conversely an armed God *can* foster timidity and the habit of shirking. It is thus the actual response that counts more, not so much the qualities of the models selected nor the gospel accepted, not the exercises performed nor the traditions respected.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

IT had been raining very hard in the evening. I began to hesitate about my coming to the Holy Mother's place. It was getting dark as well. However I wrapped myself in a water-proof. The rain drops began to splash my face; but the attraction of the Holy Mother and the thrill one feels at her presence made me forget all about the inclemency of the weather. I entered the house through the back-door. I hesitated to enter by the front door as I felt ashamed to meet the monks with a water-proof over my body. The Mother laughed aloud to see me dressed in that way. My veil was soaked with rain water. It touched her foot as I bowed down to her. The Mother said in an anxious tone, "Ah my child, you are drenched through and through.

Leave off your cloth and put on Radhu's dry one."

Devotee : Only the veil is soaked. Other parts of the cloth are dry. Please feel it.

Mother : Yes, you are right.

The Mother had asked for a piece of flannel cloth. I brought it with me. I also sewed two tapes on two of its sides so that the piece of flannel might be used as a bandage. She was very glad to see it.

### Agonies of the Famine-Struck

The talk turned to Jayrambati. The Mother said : "At one time a terrible famine devastated Jayrambati. People without number would come to our house for food. We had a store of rice from the previous year. My father made *Khichuri*, cooking that rice and Dal

together. The Khichuri was kept in a number of pots. He ordered, 'All the members of the family will partake of this Khichuri alone. The starving people will also eat the same. A little plain rice shall be cooked for my daughter, Sarada. She will eat that.' Sometimes starving people would come in such a great number that the food would not be sufficient for them. Then new Khichuri was cooked. The hot stuff was placed on the plates. I would fan the Khichuri to make it cool. People with hungry stomachs would wait for food. One day a woman came there. She had dishevelled hair and eyes that were bloodshot, like those of a lunatic. She saw the fodder soaking in a tub for the cattle and at once started eating it. We said to her that there was Khichuri inside the house. But she was too impatient to wait for that. Is it a joke to bear the agony of an empty stomach? Hunger, thirst, etc., are inevitable for all embodied beings.

### **The Force of Hunger**

"The other day only, when I was sick, I felt very hungry at midnight. Sarala and others were asleep. They were tired of the day's hard work. I hesitated to wake them up. I was looking here and there for food when I saw a few grains of fried rice in a cup. I also found a couple of biscuits near my pillow. I felt very happy. I ate the rice and the biscuits and then drank some water which was kept in a pot near me. I felt so hungry that I did not know that I had been

eating mere fried rice." The Mother laughed as she narrated the story.

Continuing she said, "Just at that time a devotee of Ranchi brought a big Papya for me. I am very fond of that fruit. I looked at it very wistfully. I wished they would give me just a slice of it. But I did not get it as I had then high fever. Oh, how dangerously ill I was at Koalpara! I was unconscious and could not leave my bed. Sarala and other girls attended on me. (In a piteous tone) I am afraid I shall have to suffer again like that. Dr. Kanjilal cured me at that time. Oh! What a burning sensation I would feel in my palms and toes! I always kept my hands on the cool and big belly of Kanjilal. Sarat (Swami Saradananda) also came to see me."

### **Ever Mindful of Devotees' Interests**

After a little while I asked her, "Well, Mother, why did you ask me not to mix with that woman devotee, in your letter from Jayram-bati?"

Mother: Oh, she belongs to a quite different school of thought. She does not accept Sri Ramakrishna as the ideal.

I was simply surprised to hear this. Though worried by a thousand troubles and bed-ridden with illness, yet she never for a moment ceased to think about our welfare.

Next day I brought ripe Papya fruit and mango with me. How happy the mother was to see the

fruits. She always would express such joy to make us happy. "Well," the Mother said, "Only yesterday we talked about the Papya fruit. It was just like this. Very nice mango too." Then she kept aside a few mangoes for Swami Saradananda, Gonen and Radhu's husband.

It was a very hot day. The Mother was covered with pimples all over her body.

Mother: Sandal-paste may cure the pimples; but I shall catch cold.

Devotee: Shall I bring some powder tomorrow? That will cure this trouble.

Mother: All right. Let me try your powder.

Referring to a certain girl, the Mother said, "What a terrible attachment she feels for her husband! She is never at ease by herself. Even while eating, she would leave her plate and go and have a peep at her husband. Day and night he is imprisoned in the room. He cannot go anywhere on account of her. Shame on her! And look at her health! She is becoming like a skeleton. She may be quieted after the birth of a child."

### Feeling for the Poor

The next day I went to see the Holy Mother and found her counting her beads on the porch. She welcomed me with a sweet smile. She kept the beads in a pouch and touched her head with it. There was a lawn in front of the house. On the western side of

the lawn a few poor people used to live in rented huts. Pointing to them she said, "Look at them. They worked hard during the day. Now they have returned home and seem to be free from all worries. Blessed are the poor!" I was at once reminded of the identical words uttered by Christ, recorded in the Bible. The Mother also repeated the same sentiment.

A few moments later, she asked me to come to the room. A bed was spread on the floor. She lay down upon it. I had sent the powder in the morning. The Mother said, "My child, I used the powder you sent. The rash is disappearing, but there is still a good deal here. Please rub the powder in this place. I feel less itching now. Sarat (Swami Saradananda) also has been suffering terribly from it. It would be so nice if someone could rub his body with this powder." "Goodness gracious!" I exclaimed, "Who would dare to do that to Swami Saradananda? This powder is used only by fashionable people." The Mother began to laugh.

The rheumatic pain in her knee-joint had aggravated a great deal. The two sons of a devotee, on the previous day, had applied an electric battery to the affected part. That relieved the pain to some extent. They also came that day. Chhotamami (sister-in-law of the Mother) said, "My rheumatic pain has also been aggravated since yesterday. I shall also apply the battery." The Mother laughed and said, "All right! Apply the battery to her

pain." No sooner had the battery touched her body than she cried out, "Alas! I am going to die! My whole body is getting numbed. Take away your machine!" We all began to laugh. She had not the patience of the Holy Mother. The sister-in-law said to the Mother, "You never said to me that I would have such a funny sensation." The Mother said, "Don't cry! Have patience. The pain will be relieved." After a while she said, "True, I feel that the pain is much less now."

### Fun about Names

Vilas Maharaj performed the evening service in the chapel. A lady asked, "Has he no 'Ananda' attached\* to his name?" "Oh yes," said the Mother, "His real name is Visweswarananda." Continuing she said, "One monk is called Kapila. Has he any 'Ananda' joined to his name? Is it Kapilananda? (Just then Sarala, a woman devotee, entered the room) Well, what is the meaning of Kapila?"

Sarala: I do not know. May be, 'monkey.'

"How is that, sister?" said I, "Kapi means a monkey. That is

---

\*The name which a monk assumes after renouncing the world generally ends with 'Ananda.'

not the meaning of *Kapila*." All laughed.

Mother: Another monk is known as Bhumananda. What is the meaning of that name?

Devotee: You know it very well, Mother.

Mother: No, let me hear it from you.

Devotee: I heard that the word 'Bhuma' signifies the eternal and omnipresent Brahman.

The Mother was evidently pleased and began to smile. Really sometimes she would behave just like a child, as if she did not know anything. Again she would most easily explain difficult spiritual truths. The book-learning of ordinary scholars could not fathom its depth. The Mother again insisted on knowing the meaning of the word 'Kapila.' She must hear it. "I don't know, Mother," said I. "There was a great sage named Kapila who was the author of the Samkhya philosophy. Again, Kapila signifies a colour. I do not know exactly in what sense the word 'Kapila' is used in connection with the name of that monk. Perhaps the word may signify other things. I do not quite recollect them now. I shall look in the dictionary tomorrow."

## THE GOAL IN EARLY BUDDHISM

By Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A.

**WE** are singularly poor in fit terms for the end or object of the religious quest. In Christianity there is the vague term, the necessarily vague term 'heaven', or the vague and negative term 'immortality', in which we come near to the vague and negative term of ancient India: *amṛta*. Or there is the word 'God' for the idea which man has worded differently everywhere in every age, the idea namely of man conceived as perfected, as consummate, as all-this all-that, as Highest, Best, Most. Or, in terms of what man may win, there is the Latin *summum bonum*, highest good. Or, in terms of what man may become, *e. g.*, *nirvāṇa*. In the Gita this is a waning *into*, the quest here being Brahman, *i. e.*, God. In Buddhism it came to be held as a waning *out*, for the Man Consummate had, in the growing divorce from Brahman teaching, been let drop, and the man seeking consummation as God was being bidden to wane out, and that without delay.

Now this was monastic Buddhism; it was not early, I mean, original Buddhism taught by the missionaries known as Sākyans. If we weigh carefully the terms, the values in the older, the Pali scriptures, we find that the original term chosen to word the religious goal of man's choice was *attha*, in Sanskrit *artha*.

Both of these forms have undergone much change in Indian history. But in them the basic idea is *r, arta*, the reaching out for something needed, something to be sought, something to be won, attained. This is the term for the goal taught in Vinaya and in Suttas, that is, where nothing in the shape of the gloss of later editing can be discerned. Thus we read in the Vinaya of a King of Magadha saying: I have instructed you in the *attha* that is of the present things (*ditthadhamme*); now learn of the *attha* of worlds beyond (*samparayika*); the Bhagavā, he will teach you of that." (*Mahavagga* v, i.) And in the Sutta-nipāṭa: "With effort stirred up to win *attha* supreme (*paramatthappattiya*)." And in the utterance alleged to have been the initial chart, as it were, of the Sākyan mission, the middle way is said to be other than the two side-issues (*anta*: 'extremes' is not a good fit) neither of which "belongs to *attha*" (*anattasamhita*). Clearly the middle way *does* "belong to, conduce to" *attha*. That this is not explicitly stated belongs to the history of the term, whereof more presently.

### Significance of Attha

Now about *attha*. I would point to three things not yet brought out. *Attha* is essentially a standpoint of the man, a valuation made by him.

It becomes meaningless if in winning it he 'wane out'. It is he who, as the Suttas say, is *atthiko*, as is the man in the forest "seeking timber (*sar'atthiko*).'' Secondly, the word is positive, not a negation. It is explicitly that which is needed, is sought, is to be won. It conveys no stress laid on what must not be needed, sought or won. It is a definite conception. Herein it is unlike *amṛta* or *nirvana*. Lastly, it is as a positive conception, not final, not ultimate. Man had, man has, as yet, no means of conceiving, much less imagining or wording the ultimate. Every so-called conception of 'Deity,' or of final consummation of life is frustrated and falls short, because for him this conceiving is as yet not possible.

Hence the choice of *attha* as the religious quest was eminently suitable. *Attha* included anything and everything that was held to be needed, to be sought, because it was something or other which for the needer, the seeker, constituted a More, a Better, a Higher in some way. Translators of Pali often render it by profit, gain, advantage, (equating it with *anisaṃsa*), or again by any aim or purpose or intent. They cannot be called wrong. Nothing that we seek in religion can rightly be more for us, as yet, than just a Better. I have used the old word 'goal', a word derived from the round pole (*gaule*, *waule*, *walus*) set up at the terminus of a race, but the terminus may be only a 'lap', a stage in a bigger competition. And it is noteworthy

that the older Suttas refer to *attha* only twice—so I find—as *paramattha*. So wise were the really great Helpers of men :

In my Father's house are many mansions. . . .

Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise. . . .

Here was no finality taught. As with the wine at the Cana feast, "the best was yet to come." The Best was, the Best is and will be ; for all Betters, Mores, Higher have their logically ideal point in consummation. Man can never rest in a Better with any sense of finality, of real uttermost achievement. But this is matter of faith. In our religion the basis of faith is knowledge, and we *know* that we seek to be, to become, to hold a Better.

The fact remains, that for us, if not for India, good words are lacking. The word I find most fit for *attha* is 'well', for when we pronounce a patient, a convalescent, 'well', we really mean 'better.' Still is the healed body soon to perish, the mind-ways too by which we wield just this particular body. Our 'well' is as relative a value as is *attha*. But alas ! we need strong wills among us to feel the need of 'well' serving as a noun, as it does in neighbouring countries. Even among the Greeks the noun : *to eu*, 'the well', was forced. Their 'the Good', which we have followed, is a comparatively plodding stodgy term. The strong wills might bring about the change. 'Urge', once a verb

only, is, *as needed*, gaining acceptance as noun.

But if *attha* meant 'good', 'gain' of any kind, let it not for a moment be supposed, that for the Sākyans the *attha* of the Middle Way was just that. The distinction ascribed to the king above, worded as it will have been by Sākyan compilers, clearly shows that, in their teaching, life as a whole was meant, when they taught '*attha*', and that this life *ditthadhamme*, being relatively but a moment, the *attha* of the worlds, *samparayika*, was an infinitely greater matter. The Middle way itself, the way of becoming in the more, the better, is also called *samparayiko*. (*Anguttara*, iv, 285, 322; iii, 49, 364).

I return in conclusion to that First Mantra of the Way. Instead of the Way being said to lead positively to *attha*, we find four terms substituted for it:—two belong to things of the mind: *sambodhi*, *abhinna*; two to monastic ideals: *upasama*, *nibbana*.<sup>1</sup> This seems strange till, with much reading in Pali, we note what a new, what a literary value came into the word *attha*, namely, that of 'meaning' in a thing said, or, later, written. The *vyanjana* or 'form', 'letter', 'word', is one, the *attha* another.

1 The term *anuttara-yogakkhema* (embodying the mere 'getting and keeping' of the old Upanishadic term) is comparatively rare in the Suttas.

2 We note the later meaning thrust by editing into the missionaries' charter bidding them teach *dhamma Satham Savyanjanam*. The meaning of *dharma*, once man's "inner controller," had become a literary matter of fixed forms of doctrine.

The business of collating and standardizing the bulk, grown unwieldy, of the remembered teachings had become very absorbing. Mission-work was coming to an end. The stationary work of cloistered editing was filling the field. The vogue of the study of mind—the young psychology of India—was very attractive, and only in the 'mind', or four phases of mind, could the man, it was thought, be discerned. And monk in monastery had become of great importance. For him the catch-words were *upasama*, quietude, *nibbana*, waning out, far more than was *attha*. Mind and the ending of the man of body and mind came to be summed up in the term *anna*: the having-come-to-know.<sup>1</sup>

A term become ambiguous seemed undesirable for the venerated First Mantra. At some time and place, probably Patna, the Mantra underwent editing into the form in which it has survived, with the monkish outlook in the first words, the substitution of four mental and monkish terms for the one *attha*, and the mnemonic refrains of the long appendix, to say nothing of the substitution of the eight qualities of the Way for some term, probably *bhava*,—then fallen into disrepute. With this I have dealt elsewhere. But perhaps nothing has done more to tie down the outlook for modern Buddhists, in the Way, to *ditthadhamme*, and banish the *samparayika*, than has that last change.

1 In the Vinaya we find *anna* actually a declaration of *attha* with the man eliminated. Could decadence further go?

# SHANKARA— A PHILOSOPHER

*By C. Mahadeviah*

## **Apparently a Theologian**

There are many scholars both in India and Europe who regard Shankara as a scholastic and theologian. A scholastic is one who tries to establish religious dogma with the help of logic. It is well known that theology assumes the existence of God, generally on the authority of scripture, and then begins to expound His relations to man and the universe; whereas the philosopher starts with experience and, with the help of reason, arrives at Truth—truth about the universe and man's relation to it. The works of Shankara, those which are accepted on all hands as his, are his commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and the Gita. It is no wonder therefore, that to a superficial observer Shankara is a mere commentator, a scholastic defending by means of logic the dogma of the Upanishads, a theologian basing his ideas of God and His relation to man and the universe on the authority of scripture.

But this notion is erroneous. It is true that Shankara has not left any work—accepted as his by scholars—in which he has built up his system on the basis of experience and independently of scripture. This is mere accident and the result of the exigencies of the situation in which he was placed. A careful study of his commentaries will how-

ever, show beyond doubt that, far from being a scholastic and theologian, Shankara is pre-eminently a philosopher.

## **Rock-bed of Experience and Reasoning**

The first point that has to be made clear is his attitude towards the authority of scripture. In his commentary on the Second Sutra he remarks :

“Whereas in matters of Vedic Karma (like the Yajna whose fruit is said to be the attainment of heaven after death) scripture is the only authority, in matters concerning Brahman not only scripture but experience also is authority; since the knowledge of Brahman can be actually experienced and Brahman is a thing already existing.”<sup>1</sup> It must be noted that here Shankara places the authority of experience on a par with that of scripture. In fact the implication is that scripture derives its authority only by conforming itself to experience. For in the beginning of his commentary on II, 1, 4, in answer to the question why scriptural testimony should not be sufficient in matters relating to Brahman, just as in matters relat-

1. “ न धर्मजिज्ञासायामिव श्रुत्यादय एव प्रमाणं ब्रह्मजिज्ञासायाम्, किंतु श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च ययासंभवमिह प्रमाणं अनुभवावसानत्वाद्भवस्तुविषयत्वाच्च ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य.”



ing to Vedic Karma, Shankara replies : "It would have been sufficient if, like Karma, Brahman had to be known only by means of scripture, not being knowable by any other means of knowledge. But unlike Karma whose fruit comes into existence only after its performance, Brahman is a thing which is already existing. And with regard to existent things there is room for other means of knowledge (than scripture) just as in the case of prithivi, etc." And then follows the significant remark : "Just as when Srutis differ from one another, they are all made to conform to one of them, so when the Sruti is in conflict with (what is ascertained from) another means of knowledge, it must be made to conform to the latter."<sup>2</sup> And again in his introduction to the Advaita Prakarana of Gaudapada's Karikas he says : "If it is asked, 'Is Advaita to be known only from scripture or from reasoning also?'—the reply is that it can be known *even from reasoning*. To show how it is possible, the Advaita Prakarana is commenced."<sup>3</sup> It must now be clear that Shankara builds up his system not on the foundations of scripture but on the rock-bed of experience and with the only reliable instrument reasoning.

2. "यथा च श्रुतीनां परस्परविरोधे सत्येक-  
वशेनेतरा नीयन्ते एवं प्रमाणान्तरविरोधेऽपि  
तद्वशेनैव श्रुतिर्नीयते."

3. "अद्वैतं किमागममात्रेण प्रतिपत्तव्यं आहो-  
स्त्विर्त्तर्केणापीत्यत आह शक्यते तर्केणापि  
ज्ञातुम्, तत्कथमित्यद्वैतप्रकरणमारभ्यते."

But if we wish to see Shankara the philosopher at his best, we have only to turn to his famous introduction to the commentary on the Brahma Sutras. Here we find a most startling yet true analysis of human experience, and the Truth is deduced by sheer reasoning. No authority of any kind is quoted nor referred to. Starting from the analysis of the totality of experience into the now well-known divisions of subject and object, Shankara shows, by referring to universal experience, how the object is mistaken for the subject and *vice versa*, and how this mistaking is at the root of all the ills of life, and how when it disappears at the dawn of knowledge, a man will realise the oneness of the Atman and attain to the consequent bliss. Having thus put the whole system in a nutshell, Shankara remarks, "How such is the meaning of all the Vedanta texts we shall presently show in these Shariraka Mimamsa Sutras."

### Love of Truth above everything else

We have referred only to the most obvious passages to show that Shankara is nothing if not a philosopher. But a close study of his commentaries will reveal, almost at every step, his extraordinary metaphysical acumen, his wonderful power of reasoning and above all, his genuine thirst for Truth. If love of Truth, irrespective of all other considera-

4. यथा च अयमर्थः सर्वेषां वेदान्तानाम्  
वयमस्याम् शारीरकमीमांसायाम् प्रदर्शयि-  
ष्यामः ।

tions, be the mark of a philosopher, then Shankara is a philosopher par excellence. In commenting on the first Sutra, to the question why, if Brahman be known as one's own self, there should be any enquiry at all about it, he replies, "But no one is agreed as to which is this self in man." Then after enumerating the various differing schools of thought including his own, he remarks,<sup>5</sup> "Such being the case, if one were to believe in any one of

these doctrines *without enquiry*, he would miss his salvation and come to ruin." Thus quite unlike the scholastic whose business is merely to prop up religious dogma on logical support, and unlike the theologian who starts with assuming his God and propounds His relations to man and the universe as satisfactorily as he can, Shankara, with a burning love for Truth, tries to solve the mystery of life by starting with human experience and, by a rigorously logical enquiry, arrives at conclusions which are even today the admiration of the world.

5. तत्राविचार्य यत्किंचित्प्रतिपद्यमानो निःश्रेय-  
सात्प्रतिहन्येतानर्थं चेयात् ।

## THE MENACE OF FORMALISM

By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T.

### Why Conflicts Arise

RELIGION has two aspects, the individual and the social, or the personal and the public. On the one hand it signifies the relation between the human soul and the Supreme Being. It embraces within its purview the entire field of man's search after the ultimate reality, covering the whole region of his attempts to probe into the mystery and discover the meaning of things. It comprises within itself all the several stages of the evolution of the human mind, starting from the conception of God as a Being to be afraid of to the realisation of God as one's own inner soul. On the other hand it has reference to the arrangements that an organised human group or society makes for the moral conduct of its mem-

bers and their ethical well-being. Those arrangements include the priests and churches, the rites and observances, the faiths and beliefs, and the laws relating to marriage, etc. Both these aspects are vital to religion, and they are complementary aspects. But religion in the sense of being the relation between the individual soul and God has an eternity and perpetual youth and freshness in it, while in the sense of being a social institution it is subject to the ravages of old age and frequently stands in need of re-adjustment and change if it should function efficiently. However, that re-adjustment is not always effected in proper time. The result is that there are conflicts between the two aspects, and occasions occur when the organised arrangements for

social welfare very severely attempt to check the progress of the individual towards the final goal of life, in his or her own distinctive path.

### **In Christendom**

Examples will make this clear. The basic principle of Christianity, for instance, in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus, is the living of a righteous and godly life which will eventually lead to the realisation of the Kingdom of God. That principle is the undying message of the Son of Man to every human being, and the message has an immortal significance. With the very laudable object of popularising this message and helping men to live up to its demands the great institution of the Church was organised and developed. But the tragedy with all human institutions is that, as time passes, the grand original idea with which they were started is forgotten and they pass into new and narrow channels, drifting farther and farther away from the principle of their birth and secret of prosperity. The Church in Europe in the course of centuries became a powerful worldly organisation and often battled with the State for status and supremacy. Nay, when discerning men in the Middle Ages foresaw the drifting away of the Church from the true ideals of Christianity and began to protest against the manifold abuses prevalent within its body, the Church, instead of welcoming such honest criticisms and reforming itself, tried to condemn the critics. Wycliffe, the morning star of the

English Reformation, created for himself a huge opposition among the powerful clergy by daring to point out the abuses in the English Church and demanding a return to the original purity and simplicity. And the Church did not hesitate to call in the aid of the State to burn all the heretics, who dared to question the practices of the men belonging to 'holy orders.' It could not but be so, because the Church had become an organisation with vested interests. And just as a capitalistic State naturally tries to suppress the dissemination of ideas likely to undermine its own authority, so too does a Church strive to perpetuate its power by relentlessly nipping in the bud all questionings of its authority. The example of the Inquisition clearly shows the extent to which even an organised religious institution will, in its degenerate days, go to protect itself from attacks on its special privileges. There are times therefore when religion in the sense of being a social arrangement becomes a serious menace to the progress of an enlightened individual or group of individuals.

### **Many Observing Fully Still**

The same has been the case with Hinduism. Hinduism realises the need for each individual of a separate and congenial path to divine beatitude. It allows its votaries to follow their chosen ideal and assures that all roads lead to the same goal. This is the 'individualistic' side of Hinduism. There is then a 'social'

phase to Hinduism. The ancient wise men who organised Hindu society have left elaborate instructions regarding the religious life of its members. And since religion is the very breath of the Indian, even the minutest details of daily living have been endowed by the leaders of Hindu society with a spiritual and higher significance. Even the barely physical aspect of life has been given a religious colouring. The law-givers of Hindu society have said in what manner the teeth should be cleaned, baths performed, meals taken, and sleep done. In addition to these of course are the very elaborate injunctions regarding the performance of *Sandhya* or morning, noon and evening worship, the adoration of fire, the oblations to the manes, sages and gods, etc. They have also decided how the hair should be dressed, how the cloth should be worn, and how the caste-mark should be exhibited. These refer to the day-to-day life. Then there are the endless instructions regarding the celebration of marriages, the performance of funeral obsequies, the observance of pollution consequent on the death of a relation, etc., etc. We must admit that the minds which conceived all these practices in such minuteness and vastness must have been gifted with a highly constructive and analytical power. Not merely that. The fact that after centuries of vicissitudes of fortune, after political upheavals of unprecedented magnitudes, after deadly attacks of foreign cultures and violent impacts

of alien civilisations, the Hindu society must still respect the ancient injunctions and follow them minutely, speaks volumes as much to the solidarity of Hindu society, its healthy conservative spirit and the great tenacity with which it holds on to national ideas, as to the remarkable foresight and power of organisation of the great framers of Hindu laws. Even now, when we fancy we have turned round the corner and shaken off from our body politic meaningless customs and outworn observances and are living very rationally, there are persons who follow the ancient customs to the very letter and would not depart from the old practices for all the treasures of the sea. All honour to them really, for they at least are not hypocritical. They have the courage to stick to what, according to their own light, is healthy and righteous.

### Failure to mark Non-essentials

But yet this rigid adherence of theirs to the ancient injunctions sometimes assumes the form of a serious menace to the progress of earnest individuals. The reason is simple. Religion in the sense of the relation between the human soul and God is unchanging and is called *Sanatana Dharma*. All the truths pertaining to that aspect of religion will stand for all time undiminished in truthfulness. But the social aspect of religion comprising the numerous details pertaining to the ethical life of a human group will have to change as times march on,

and circumstances and ideas and political conditions evolve. This is the *Yuga Dharma*. A simple illustration will explain this further. That the soul in man is a spark of the All-pervading is a truth that no one can gainsay at any time. But, that girls should be married when they are young might have been good in the conditions of society centuries ago, but may be harmful to society in its present environment. Yet because the great seers have enveloped every little detail of a Hindu's life with a religious significance and have left behind them writings to guide the higher spiritual life of aspirants as well as the lower home and community life of citizens, the orthodox among us are unable to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential, between the permanently significant and the temporarily meaningful. The result is a ceaseless clash between the progressive section of society and the conservative one. The incapacity of the latter to adjust things in accordance with the needs and requirements of the times often results in anomalies and ugly situations.

### Single Tests and Crude Verdicts

Let us take for example the very simple, and what to modern mentality might seem very silly, question of the *Sikha* or tuft of hair. The old law-givers have said that every true Hindu must have a tuft of hair. This injunction is in no way strange. We see Muhammadans laying as much stress on the growing of a beard. And the Sikh *gurus* have

ordained that every Sikh must adorn himself with the five k's, *viz* : long hair, dagger, comb, bangle and short drawers (*kes*, *khanda*, *khanga*, *kara*, and *kach*). Then there is the tonsure ceremony among Christians. It is natural and even good for members pertaining to a particular group and showing allegiance to a particular faith to have certain uniform symbols and certain distinctive marks. Such symbols and marks are the sign, and may at times be the promoter, of group solidarity. But yet the essence of fidelity to the Hindu faith does not lie in the *Sikha*. Externals have their values, but are externals after all. What really matters is the inner significance. It is far better to be true to a really vital principle of Hinduism and be without the *Sikha* than to have a predominating tuft and possess no other qualities of that great faith. Some of our young men who are really thirsting after some spiritual illumination and strive after plain living and high thinking in their own humble way are looked at askance by the 'orthodox' group, just because they happen to dress their hair in 'unshastraic' way. Many youths who sacrifice all personal comforts and court hardships in the name of the country's cause do not win recognition at the hands of the conservative folk, because they happen to break certain customs regarding caste exclusiveness. Any young man who resolves to live the life of a Brahmachari meets

with serious opposition from among his relatives. This spirit of rigid adhesion to old scriptural injunctions has even taken away from certain persons the capacity to adjudge real worth.

I was once painfully surprised to be told by a learned and holy person of the orthodox style that I should not refer to Vivekananda as a *Swami*, or to Ramakrishna as a *Paramahansa*, or to Gandhiji as a *Mahatma*, because none of the three possessed in his opinion the technical qualifications requisite for the possession of the titles. In the case of Vivekananda, I think it was his birth that made the gentleman deny him the title of *Swami*, while in the case of Ramakrishna I remember him quoting a *sloka* saying that a *Paramahansa* must live in the forest, etc. (and Ramakrishna lived in Calcutta). As regards Gandhiji he took his stand on some technical definition of the term *Mahatma*, which Gandhiji with his immersion in the country's cause may not *literally* satisfy.

Well indeed may one despair of those who deny on such grounds the suffix of *Paramahansa* to Ramakrishna. As regards Vivekananda he himself has answered in a most eloquent and moving manner the criticism that because he was a Sudra he had no right to become a Sannyasin. (Vide Swami Vivekananda's lectures at Madras. Regarding Gandhiji one can only say that the Indian genius has conferred on him the grand title of *Mahatma* in a moment of supreme intuition, for

Swami Vivekananda has said 'Him I call a Mahatma whose heart bleeds for the poor. Others are but Duratmas,' and it is common knowledge that every misery of the poor finds an echo in Gandhiji's heart.

Examples of similar crude notions on the part of orthodox persons can easily be multiplied. We realise now that the greatest service of Vivekananda to modern and future India was his harnessing the vast resources of the monks and turning them into socially beneficial channels. In thus combining the spirit of renunciation with that of service he really made history, and in making the monks come away from the caves and cloisters into the midst of the common multitude he immensely enlarged the boundaries of what people had come to understand by spiritual life. But yet even today,—to mention another small fact—we find men who will not readily accept that the members of the order of Ramakrishna, and of similar other groups are monks at all, because they happen to travel in buses and trams and live in huge buildings and carry umbrellas! So strong is the hold of a rigid formalism on human minds that in them externals assume a vital importance while the inner significance is scarce cared for.

The orthodox thus do not tolerate any deviation from the "prescribed" path. The prescribed path is intended for the common multitude, for the generality of mankind.

But exceptional souls must be given freedom to march along their own ways. There is even a tendency among the votaries of the formalist school to look with suspicion on all worships of images not carried on in the old customary way. An excess of devotion to a particular deity or a whole-day absorption in a particular *sadhana* is not appreciated if it involves the renunciation of one of the hoary injunctions.

Naturally there is a spirit of resistance among minds steeped in modern culture to the demands of orthodoxy, because such demands involve loyalty to superfluities and attacks on healthy individual progress. Forms and symbols have their proper place in the scheme of things, but they must never be allowed to retard the evolution of human beings. A rigid formalism is a serious menace to individual uplift, because the letter killeth, while the spirit giveth life.

Take the question of the admission into our temples of the so-called untouchables. Custom has so much hardened now that all members of a particular community, no matter what their spiritual attainments are, no matter what their earnestness is regarding the higher life, are flatly denied admission into temples. The same is the case with regard to the ineligibility of a certain class of persons to read the scriptures. Eligibility to study the subtle reasonings of the scriptures was quite reasonably confined to the few who were fit for the task by reason of a sharp intellect, a pure

mind etc. But now the original line of division has been obliterated, and the criterion of birth, according to the orthodox, has become the sole test of eligibility.

### Need for Wholesome Changes

If any society must live efficiently it is necessary that periodically it searches itself and effects a pruning and a cleansing. The overgrowth of weeds must be cleared, and a readjustment of parts, a reorientation of paths, brought about. If a society is unable to do so it means its last days are come, for in the absence of recognised leaders who could with authority order the necessary changes, society will come to ruin as a ship without the pilot. We must have new Manus amongst us now. If the old forms and usages of Hinduism are overhauled and re-set in accordance with the demands of the modern age, then will formalism cease to be a menace to society, as it has become now, and prove to be a real blessing instead. If on the other hand we spend all our energies only in the discussion of questions like the number of times we must wash our hands after meals, the number of days of pollution we must observe on the death of a distant, unseen and uncared-for relation or the distance there must be between an untouchable and ourselves, our religion will fast sink into a 'kitchen-religion.' The greatest need of the social aspect of Hinduism to-day is its being brought up-to-date; it must be bathed anew in the waters of evolution and be made to

discard worn-out rags and don fresh clothes. Such a process will not only give Hinduism a greater appropriateness and an added glory, but will also reveal its inner soul in a better light.

## FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

*By Swami Nirlepananda*

**T**HERE is very often seen a tendency among us to belittle the value of *education*. Many among us say that receiving education is the same as courting economic ruin. But if as a result of being literate we catch the contagion of becoming averse to physical labour, or if a tendency is detected in some of us to dislike or hate active work, the fault is decidedly *ours*. All such derogatory feeling is due to mental disease, or a very regrettable mental maladjustment. No literature worth its name teaches us such a mean lesson. On the other hand we have noticed in villages that the little sign of light, a proneness to adjust oneself and move with the times—in one word, all our future potentiality and hope of regeneration—are seen in the rational and broad attitude of life taken up by none other than the small sprinkling of young *educated* villagers. The leaven of progress and leading cannot but come from that quarter.

### Ways of the Uneducated

The older generation of people who are mostly unlettered and the illiterate womenfolk as a whole, are the stoutest enemies, rank oppositionists of all healthy improvements in the tone, mode and manner of mutual behaviour among themselves

—high-castes and lower grades. I am speaking from my first-hand and sometimes pathetic experiences of the Bankura District, in Bengal, ranging for years. The class called Utkal Brahmins (who have come from the contiguous Orissa district) are most rigid and unbending and cruel, in their 'touch-me-nots.' They would gladly smoke the indented Muslim-made *Bidis*, which are very often finished with the saliva from the mouth of city Muslim makers. Or they would relish the sweet *Gur*-cakes called locally *labats* exclusively prepared by Muslims. But suddenly all their sense of Brahminic aristocracy, tyranny and superiority complex, handed down from generation to generation is at full play when a non-Brahmin, of their own Hindu fold, touches their rice-dish or drinking water-glass! Fancy the utter ludicrous situation created by these people. These wisecrackers repeating high-sounding classical Sanskrit Slokas, epitomising the philosophy of unity and side by side with it spurning their low-caste neighbours from off their courtyard as worse than plague or cholera bacilli!

I visited this class of people in their own huts and homes and lived with them for days. Most of them



are extremely dirty and unfit for civil, sanitary society, although financially far better situated than their neighbours. Yet they all claim the highest honour as a matter of birthright.

Of course, there are honourable exceptions and no generalisation is ever fully true. The bright, strong side of their lives must be alluded to unequivocally and we are heart and soul ready to heap praises upon their heads on this score. They are very plain and simple in their dress and diet and they seldom take the bazaar-made adulterated sweets and other edibles. And they have the excellent, admirable, socially and physiologically sound practice of not allowing newly wedded couples to live together before both attain their age of puberty. For this very reason they are a fine type of healthy men and women to be highly spoken of for their strong-built frames, in spite of their untidy, slovenly habits. Conservatism in its redeeming feature has saved them from all manner of unbecoming foppishness and unnecessary luxury.

Interests are, however, sometimes at loggerheads. The superstitious, selfish, old set of men are nervous about educating the female members of their family, lest in the same process and a final sequel thereof, these become enlightened and *reasonable* enough in their attitude of lives and try to quickly shake off and eschew the cruel, long-standing and un-moral despotisms of their menfolk.

### The Educated to the Fore

In the village of Khatra where I lived long, the low-caste people, the Bauris specially, on one occasion demanded an exorbitant and deterrent rate of remuneration to carry the Durga-image from the celebration-hall and get it immersed in the village-pond. Perhaps they had an idea of making some bargain out of the helpless condition of the upper class people, in this their monopoly-labour. They knew not that a new India had already come at their doors and begun walking with the strong legs of its handful of really brave and cultured youths. The spirited young men, mostly literate, belonging to high castes, themselves rushed to volunteer their service. They performed the tough task quite smoothly, without the least compunction of heart, the least hesitation, the least blushing. They all came out of it more powerful, more glorious than ever. It was such a novel, a rather thrilling experience for them—a sight to see, really speaking. The mirth, merriment and all were a symbol of the New Age we are already in.

### Plain Living and High Doing

On occasions it was a privilege to see additional examples of this new ferment, the baptism of renunciation and service given by the great Āchārya Vivekananda. I distinctly remember a veritable village Hampden, Govinda Mallick by name, fired by the ideal of Rejuvenated India, carrying to the cremation-ground the dead bodies of those

unfortunate folk whose kith and kin had left them off,—they who died of tuberculosis, cholera or small-pox. Mallick with his youth league of social servants was doing the last rites,—the right of relations. He is still a worthy representative of the Ramakrishna - Vivekananda - Seva-Ideal, practising and working it out in his smooth, unpretentious, everyday life of a householder. With scant vernacular education, he is veritably—a miracle. He and his associates are undoubtedly the hope of the future as admirable types of plain-living, high-thinking and *high-doing*. In the present sad state of our villages, noble actions, magnanimous, charitable, sympathetic dealings in the handling of untold problems—are all that is expected and wanted of village workers. The charge of being merely *bookish* and over-educated cannot be laid at the doors of these young men we are speaking about. I have had occasions quite unintentionally to examine Mallick. The very mention of his name represents generosity in that quarter. And I found him to my utter joy perfectly unattached,—something of the expected but rare stuff of a real Karma-yogin. That discovery is infinitely more valuable, more gratifying than an *El Dorado*, a land of gold in a new continent. The crying need is for *men* of this true mettle,—men who are the glory of their mothers, men who never fail their brothers, men who are always *true*, however *false* are others. All praises are too in-

sufficient to characterise Mallick's sterling merit and his rare strength of character. His very breath is courage and withal he is so very unostentatious, without the least flourish of show or self-assertion or the sort of urban self-aggrandisement and self-advertisement with which we are all familiar. He is a force of Divine Mother—simple, silent. I have not the least hesitation to call him a creator of New Bengal—an exemplar of the Ideal Youth which is a dream of ours and which we so much read about and talk about. To meet him and live with him is just to be in the midst of a holy pilgrimage with all its edifying, sacred associations. All appreciative references are felt to be quite inadequate to give expression to what one has in his heart after he comes to know of the man—the man who always thinks of *others first* and *himself last*. He works as a patient tiller with his group of paid wage-earners. The rocky soil and hard environ has produced in him a hard, strong, painstaking man, with muscles of steel.

### Sad Failure of the Orthodox

When fire broke out on one occasion, the High School Boarding boys at Khatra, automatically at once jumped off in the right laudable, manly spirit, to put it out first and foremost. While the old orthodox lot began at that tragic hour to cogitate, vegetate, discuss and *debate* about the origin, the history, the manner of its spread and further, how the supposed culprits

are to be booked to justice! When a contagious disease breaks out they are prone to spend enough money over all-day Harinama (*astamprahara*) Kirtanam for five consecutive days and nights (which is not bad in itself); but are not willing to get vaccinated in order to immune themselves from attack. Neither are they least willing to purge off their insanitary habits, or to spend

anything on these scores. They have very advantageously managed to forget the immortal and salutary lesson of the Gita where it inculcates the absolute importance of the right type of effort for the fruition of particular actions, the Divine will or grace being the ever present common factor behind everything—विद्यिष्यन् प्रयत्नं चेष्टा etc. The message is missing in actual life.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Substance may be the cause of substance. Things other than substance may be the cause of things other than substance. The Atmans (Jivas) are not either substance or something other than substance. (53)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

It has been said that the essence of Atman is unborn and one. When the relation of effect and cause is superimposed on anything, there must be a substance giving rise to substance, or something other than substance giving rise to something other than substance. A thing cannot rise of itself. In our experience, we never see unsubstantiality being the independent cause of anything. Atmans are neither substance nor something other than substance; and therefore cannot be the effect or cause of anything. Thus being neither substance nor other than substance, Atman is not the effect or cause of anything.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Thus objects (and Jivas) are not born of the mind and the mind is not born of the objects (or Jivas). Therefore, wise people adopt the principle of the non-production of cause and effect. (54)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

From the reasons stated (above), we conclude that mind is of the same nature as the essence of Consciousness, that external objects are not born of mind, that mind is not born of external objects and that all objects (and Jivas) are mere appearances superimposed on Consciousness. Thus no effect comes from a cause nor a cause from the effect, there being thus non-production of causes and effects. Knowers of Brahman hold to the principle of non-existence of cause and effect in Atman.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

As long as one is possessed with the idea of cause and effect, cause

and effect will continue to operate. When the idea declines cause and effect cease to operate. (55)

*Sankara's Commentary*

If you ask, 'What about those who believe in cause and effect,' we reply (as follows): As long as one believes, "By reason of my merit and demerit, I am the actor and the enjoyer of the results of merit and demerit, in another birth (incarnation) among other living beings," that as long as one is possessed with the spirit of 'cause and effect' or has superimposed on one's Atman, this idea; so long, will the cause and effect operate. That is to say, merit and demerit and their results must continue to act on that individual. Under the influence of incantations and medicines, one can be dispossessed of the spirits; so by the realisation of Advaita (non-duality), one is dispossessed of the spirit of cause and effect due to Avidya. The idea declines and there is cessation of the operation of cause and effect.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

As long as one is possessed of the idea of cause and effect, so long will the world of Samsara be present. When this idea declines Samsaric world ceases to be. (56)

*Sankara's Commentary*

We reply to the question as to what harm there is in the operation of cause and effect. As long as the idea is not destroyed by proper discrimination, the world of Samsara continues to grow larger. When the idea of cause and effect ceases to exist, the world of Samsara is not manifested, in the absence of a cause.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Everything is derived from the (veiling) power of Avidya and

nothing is therefore eternal. Everything is unborn and of the nature of Be-ness and consequently destruction cannot be predicated of it. (57)

*Sankara's Commentary*

(It is objected :) Atman is unborn and there is nothing beside it. If so, how can you speak of birth and destruction of the world of Samsara due to the operation of cause and effect? (We reply :) Listen; Avidya is the power (by which Atman is veiled) and by which the illusion of the worldly experience is spread out. All this arises from Avidya and therefore what is due to Avidya can never be eternal. The world of Samsara characterised by birth and death is said to be present. From the point of view of ultimate Reality, all this is unborn Atman. As it is unborn, it can never have any destruction as a result of the relation of cause and effect.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Those things said to be born are not born in reality. Their birth is like Maya which is what is not known. (58)

*Sankara's Commentary*

(It may be asked :) 'How is the production of things other than Atman, brought about?' These things arise as said already, from Avidya alone. From the point of view of Reality, they are not born at all. As their birth is but the result of Maya, it is said to be like Maya. If you ask, 'Is Maya a substance?' we say, not at all, as Maya is that which is not known and is but a name given to that which is not known.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Only Maya sprouts can come out of Maya seeds. They are neither

eternal nor transitory (subject to destruction). The same applies to all beings (Jivas). (59)

*Sankara's Commentary*

We go on to show how the birth of these beings is like Maya. The magical mango sprouts (produced by a magician) from magical seeds, are subject neither to permanent birth nor to death. The idea of birth and death is suitable only for those which have no substantiality. But from the point of view of Reality, the terms birth and death are not applicable in the case of Jivas.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

You cannot speak of permanence or impermanence in the case of all

those that have no birth. When words cannot be used for description, any detailed consideration of them is not possible. (60)

*Sankara's Commentary*

In the case of the Atmans of the essence of Reality, Consciousness and Being, unborn, eternal and non-dual, no statements can be made of permanence or the opposite. Words are used for describing things. But when they cannot be used for description and explanation, their exact nature as this or that, cannot be determined, as they cannot be said to be either permanent or its opposite: as the Sruti says "when words turn back &c."

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Function of Universities

The Convocation address of Sir S. Radhakrishnan delivered under the auspices of the Allahabad University will ever be remembered as one of the finest utterances not only embodying the highest educational ideals but also placing before the youth and the country, in an unmistakably bold language, a social, philosophical and cultural outlook which we are apt to forget in the general unrest of the times. He has deviated from the general way these addresses are delivered, and spoken in a candid and courageous manner which very few, holding the high position he occupies, have dared to adopt. At the very outset he says, "There is something wrong about a system which turns out men who are not wanted by the society which has paid

for their training.....It is not the function of universities to produce an academic proletariat which is fed on idleness and so develops mental flabbiness and neurasthenia." And he points out that the system of education requires 'drastic revision from the foundation to the flag-pole.' It is out of date and unsuited to modern conditions and involves a colossal waste of intellect and energy. The main defect of the secondary and primary education in India is that they are 'dominated exclusively by the University requirements.' He pleads for a general cultural standard to enable them to meet the varied needs of practical life. "The value of University education is considerably impaired by the presence in the University of men who are unfit for higher literary or scientific education."

### **Wanted Leaders of the Right Type**

Sir Radhakrishnan deploras the lack of efficient leaders in society. Universities are being affected "by the great moral issues about the first principles of social organisation." It is the function of the Universities to produce men of light and learning who can take up the role of leadership. But at present our leaders with University degrees are "without any clear vision of humanity's goal. Our leaders set forth programmes which they value more than the lives of their fellow-men. They will not hesitate to send millions to death to prove themselves in the right. Their own particular purposes should be achieved by any means, however barbarous or inhuman."

### **Decline of True Democracy**

Democracy is abandoned by most of the Western nations ; Dictatorship has become the general form of government among them. "The ordinary decencies of public life, the conventions which raise human society above a pack of animals, the bonds of personal loyalty and friendship, are being swept away by groups who neither respect laws nor recognise the common obligations of humanity. The zeal of the Dictator shrinks at nothing, not even carefully planned cold blooded murders of political opponents." All this discontent and disorder, the lecturer traces to economic causes. Governments are unable to deal with economic depression and the

problem of unemployment. With the rise of the Dictator all economic efforts come under political direction and "peaceful evolution which is the method of democracy yielded to forcible revolution." He then goes on describing how militarism is in the ascendant. "Might is today more right than ever" and nations are heading towards another world cataclysm. They are fed on a fodder of blood and iron. "When the next war breaks out, we will have a relapse into barbarism, if not the collapse of civilisation."

### **A Ray of Light**

From this gloomy picture of world conditions he hearkens us to the message of Mahatma Gandhi. "Compared with the war cries and emotional outbursts of political Dictators today, the parting message of Gandhi to the last session of the Indian National Congress is like a ray of heavenly light let into a world of deep darkness." "A society does not grow out of its own motions. It is carried forwards by the efforts of a minority, a remnant in the words of Matthew Arnold, and that minority owes its inspiration to individuals, the wisest and the best, of insight and wisdom, of courage and power. It is individuals who rise above the national surroundings, who are in common with the good, seen and unseen, who have the energy to graft their vision on to the existing social substance—it is they who will carry civilisation forward." Mahatma Gandhi "commands his country-

men to transcend finitude and relativity which belong to politics as a national phenomenon and develop the capacity to apprehend absolute truth and recognise absolute obligation, all that we include under the names of reason and conscience, truth and love. As we contemplate the stupendous movement across the pages of history, we witness the power of ideas." Mahatmaji appeals to us "to build a new India on moral and spiritual foundations." His historic utterance, "*I shall never accept a self-government brought about by violence,*" according to Sir Radhakrishnan, will be written "not only by the side of the utterances of great national leaders like Pericles and Cicero, or Washington or Lincoln, but also of great religious reformers, as that of the immortal voices of the human race in all that relates to the highest efforts of men and nations." Speaking about Great Britain and India, he says, "For the sake of world peace and British prestige, it is to be hoped that the peace-loving liberal-minded section of Great Britain will realise that the days of paternalism are over and an empire is justified only because it is a partnership held together by the free consent of self-governing peoples."

### **An Appeal to the Youth**

The Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University then proceeds to make a spirited appeal to the youth of the country to arouse in them and their neighbours the proper social conscience which alone can

build up an honest and healthy social organisation. Says he:

"There is an organic connection between the social conscience and the political arrangement. A more stable and representative government demands a juster social order. A society that tolerates the scourge of untouchability has no right to be called civilised.....The pernicious influences at home and schools, which inculcate wrong notions about caste superiority and communal contempt, require to be removed with a drastic hand. It is no answer to say that each one is at liberty to follow his own customs and creeds but the docencies of social life require not passive non-interference but active sympathy and understanding. It is true we do not shoot or guillotine people and yet we do things pretty thoroughly in our own way by means of ostracism and social boycott .....Hindus and Muslims have lived together for centuries and yet we cherish the most amazing illusions about each other's character.....Our education, if it is successful, should protect us against passion and prejudice and develop in us a resistance to the power of the press and propaganda to ply on our weakness."

### **The Work Before Universities**

In conclusion he says that "the growth of national consciousness is retarded by communal separation."

"Many of us have an emotional apprehension of the vastness and complexity of the situation, but what is required is a scientific view. Here is work for a number of University men and women to disentangle the conflicting aims, to melt the various influences for good into one supreme social effort which is essential to make men less selfish, less

aggressive, less given to frivolity. It is for the Universities to produce men who are able to stand out of the welter of commonplace egoism to seek public good, who have intellectual conscience to see the truth and the moral courage to pursue it."

Let us hope that the initiative taken by Sir Radhakrishnan will find constructive application in all our educational institutions and help them to turn out men with true enlightened civic and national ideals to fill up the ranks of true citizenship, the lack of which we so sadly deplore.

### **Basic Principles not Much Discussed**

*The Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* for April-May 1934 contains, among many others, a very instructive article on the "Ideals, Merits and Defects of Ancient Indian Educational System," by Dr. A. S. Altekar, M. A., LL. B., D. Litt. An important feature of the article is that the learned writer has, wherever possible, made references to relevant facts in the history of the West and enabled the reader to judge better the worth or worthlessness of Indian methods. For example, he begins by telling that "to persons interested in theories and ideals of education, the history of ancient Indian education may appear rather disappointing," since our people were more concerned with "describing the main features" than with "discussing its basic principles." The system also

early stage ; a few changes did take place, but the writers of later times are more anxious to conceal than expound the changed methods and ideals." Side by side we are shown that "in Europe too there was hardly any systematic discussion of the theories of education till recent times. Says the Dr.,—

"Theories about the importance of the child and its inclinations in outlining an educational system were unknown before the time of Rousseau. Whether memory should be trained more than the reasoning faculty, whether reading should be encouraged more than reflection, whether education is expanse of natural powers or an accretion to them from without, what is the relative importance of and proper time for physical, æsthetic, moral and intellectual training, are problems that have begun to be systematically discussed even in the West only in the last hundred years or so."

### **India's Peculiar Circumstances**

Why is it that in ancient India, we sometimes come across stray reflections about these problems, but we never see any regular and systematic discussion? We read :

"This was perhaps to some extent a natural consequence of the absence of any social or state control over the educational system. Both the state and society gave full liberty to teachers. As they were not subjected to any appreciable external criticism or control, they went on their traditional grooves without giving much thought to the fundamental problems. We have further to note that the peculiar constitution of Hindu society rendered a discussion of some of these problems out of question. For instance, the



controversy about literary *versus* useful education was inconceivable in ancient Indian society. Professions came to be assigned hereditarily to different groups; if anybody had started the discussion of this controversy, he would have been told that for certain classes liberal education was more important than useful education and for certain others the case was just the reverse."

### Character and Personality

The writer then passes on to an elaborate account of how the "formation of character, building up of personality, preservation of ancient culture and the training of the rising generation in the performance of the social and religious duties" were the main aims of the teachers of the olden days. Says he :

"We come across several masterful personalities in different walks of life in ancient India, but how far they were typical of their age we do not know. Hindu achievements, however, in different walks of life and branches of knowledge were of a fairly high order in ancient India, and this would hardly have been possible if the products of the Hindu educational system were not masterful personalities. This changed for the worse in mediæval times; *Brahmacharya* discipline became nominal when a vast majority of students began to marry at a very early age; growth of independent judgment became stunted with the growing veneration for the past and its time-hallowed tradition. Self-confidence began to suffer from the convulsions of sudden foreign invasions and long alien rule, imposing a hated religion and strange culture with the aid of the sword. We must not judge the success of the ancient Indian educational system

in building personalities of students by conclusions based upon its products at the advent of the British rule."

### Preservation and Transmission of Culture

If we travel over the length and breadth of the country we shall be surprised to find an extraordinary amount of cultural uniformity. And the credit for all these common features contributing to Hindu unity has to be largely given to that aspect of the ancient educational system which made arrangements to preserve and transmit the culture of the past. We read :

"Members of the professions were to train their children in their own lines, rendering available to the rising generation at the outset of its career all the skill and processes that were acquired after painful efforts of the bygone generations. The services of the whole Aryan community were conscripted for the purpose of the preservation of the Vedic literature. Every *Dviija* must learn at least a portion of his sacred literary heritage. . . A section of the Brahmana community however was always available to sacrifice its life and talents in order to ensure the preservation of the sacred texts. Theirs was a life-long and almost tragic devotion to the cause of learning. For, they consented to spend their life in committing to memory what others and not they could interpret. . . Here the goal was avowedly cultural and not utilitarian."

### Efficient Citizenship Aimed At

Before proceeding to consider the defects of the ancient system, the writer winds up the merits by refuting the charge that the hold of religion over the Hindu mind made

their teaching 'other-worldly.' The system, says he, aimed at producing "youths eminently fit to perform their civic and social duties; if any spiritual merit for the life to come were to be achieved through the

Brahmacharya, it was to be through the proper performance of its duties which however were principally determined with a view to make the student an efficient and god-fearing citizen."

## OBITUARY NOTES

### Nirbhayananda and Madhusudananda

We record with grief the passing away of two aged Swamis of the Order, Nirbhayananda and Madhusudananda. The former had been ailing for some time and he passed away at Benares. He was known among the devotees as Kanai Maharaj (senior). He was one of the earliest few who joined the Baranagore Math. Seeing that Swami Vivekananda was not keeping good health after his return from the West, Kanai devotedly attended to his personal comforts. Swamiji was pleased with his service and blessed him. For some time Nirbhayananda was also at Madras with Swami Ramakrishnanandaji. In his later years Nirbhayananda used to charm people by narrating incidents in the 'life of Swami Vivekananda in such a manner as to enable his hearers to understand better the many-sidedness of the Swamiji's personality.

Madhusudananda was a reputed Kaviraj and he took holy Orders in his old age. Many of his disciples in the medical line are well known physicians now. He was a good Sanskrit scholar and could fluently talk and write in that language. Though advanced in

years, he was very active and was always cheerful and buoyant.

May their souls rest in Peace!

### Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao

With deep sorrow we also record the passing away of Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao on 1st December at Bangalore at the ripe old age of 85 years. He worked successively as the Dewan of Travancore, Mysore and Baroda and made a name for himself as a far-seeing and courageous statesman. In 1892 he first met Swami Vivekananda. Mr. Madhava Rao was one of those who took a prominent part in congratulating the Swami on his epoch-making achievement in the West. He always evinced a deep interest in our cause and helped in the building up of our Math at Bangalore. As recently as last October, he presided over the lecture of Swami Gnaneshwarananda who had come from Chicago on a short visit to India. He was greatly delighted to know from the Swami that Vedantic ideals and the culture of India were slowly making their influence felt in the West. He was very much interested in cultural exchange between the East and the West. In Mr. Madhava Rao the Mission has lost a sincere friend and admirer. May his soul attain Peace!

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE RIDDLE OF THIS WORLD:** *By Sri Aurobindo: The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pages 236.*

The letters of Sri Aurobindo, collected in the volume before us, were originally issued by him in answer to questions raised by his disciples or others interested in Yoga and spiritual life. As they are of general interest and touch problems often raised in relation to spiritual truth and experience, they have been brought together and published under the above title, which is the subject of the last of the letters.

As a Yogi who has attained spiritual heights, Sri Aurobindo is well known. The book under notice, together with his other works, *viz.*, 'Yogic Sadhana,' 'Yoga and Its Objects,' 'Isha Upanishad' and 'Essays on the Gita' sums up the essence of his Yoga and spiritual experience. Stated briefly, its aim is to bring the supermind, which is the vast truth-consciousness of which the ancient seers spoke, "into the consciousness of the earth and fix it there." His Yoga is a double movement of ascent and descent. "One rises to higher and higher levels of consciousness, but at the same time one brings down their power not only into mind and life, but in the end into the body." The highest of these levels, the one at which it aims, is the supermind. Only when that can be brought down is a divine transformation possible in the earth consciousness. The author points out that there is no real contradiction between the two movements.

In the essay entitled "Western Metaphysics and Yoga" the distinction between European metaphysical thought and the Indian system of Yoga, the aim of which is to attain the highest truth through intuition and illumination and spiritual experience, is stressed. European metaphysical thought does not go beyond the intellect and any seeking of the Supreme Truth through

intellect alone must end in agnosticism, while the Supreme and all that is beyond the mind must remain for ever unknowable. The Unknowable of the European agnostic must not be confounded with the Unknowable of the Vedantin. They are poles asunder.

Perhaps the most important essay in the volume is that entitled "The Intermediate Zone", which refers to trials on the path of the Sadhaka, who is in the stage of transition between the ordinary consciousness in mind and the true Yoga knowledge. In this stage one may easily go astray, following false voices and mendacious guidance, which means spiritual death and disaster. This is a zone which many Sadhakas have to cross, in which many wander for a long time and out of which many never emerge. In this excursion in unknown entangled regions the Sadhaka needs the aid of a true Teacher.

We have perused with great interest the essays collected in this volume. They depict the author's own spiritual experiences, presented in brilliant and telling words and should prove highly useful to Sadhakas on the path.

A. S.

**THE YOGA DARSHANA:** *Comprising the Sutras of Patanjali, with the Bhasya of Vyasa translated into English with notes by Dr. Ganganath Jha. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.*

Yoga Sutra is the celebrated work of Maharshi Patanjali, dealing with 'Raja Yoga' or the path leading to the communion of the spirit, freed from the shackles of matter. His aphorisms contain India's higher psychology. The conclusions are based on deep enquiry and investigation. Like all scientific truths they are amenable to experimentation and verification. The adherents need not pin their faith on any scripture or authority of persons, ancient or modern. The most essential qualification is to have a free, open and unbiassed mind,

divested of all preconceived notions and prejudices. Even a sceptic is not debarred from entering its holy precincts. Believe not anything unless you feel it or have experience of it in your life. This is its creed. The philosophy is the same as that of the Sankhya system. The only difference is that, unlike the latter, it postulates the existence of God, as the Teacher of all teachers and possessor of all excellences and noble qualities in the highest degree.

Dr. Jha has done a signal service by his masterly translation of the book with the commentary of Vyasa without which the abstruse aphorisms would have been incomprehensible. In the introduction he has given a lucid summary of the main topics that have been dealt with in the body of the book. The notes are exhaustive and the explanations are simple and faithful. The learned scholar has spared no pains to make the translation easy and the style attractive. The get-up and the printing are also excellent. The book will be immensely helpful to those who are interested in the practical aspect of the Yoga philosophy. The English-reading public will be highly indebted to Dr. Jha and the Theosophical Society

for this valuable service (coming after the publication of the Upanishad Series with Sankara's commentary) and we earnestly recommend the book to all lovers of knowledge who have a sincere interest in the practical philosophy of the Hindus. S. A.

THE DIVINE LIFE: *By Ramdas. Published by Anandashram, Ramnagar, Kanhangad P. O., S. India. Pages 108. Price As. 10.*

This booklet is No. 6 of the series published by the Anandashram. "If life is allowed to express itself compatible with the inspiration handed down from the ancient Rishis and the Teachers of the world, it will be fully informed with a creative genius for producing works of enduring value and surpassing beauty and excellence in the fields of art, sculpture, poetry, heroism literature and industry." This is the keynote of this lucidly written volume.

U. L. T. PAMPHLET SERIES: Nos. 29 & 30: *Published by the Theosophy Company (India), Ltd., 51, Esplanade Road, Bombay. Price each 1 anna.*

These pamphlets are entitled "A Master's Letter" and "Karma the Compensator."

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. Sevashrama, Shyamala Tal

The Sevashram has been giving medical relief to the residents of the deep Himalayan jungles around, for the past nineteen years. There is no other means of medical relief within 30 miles and patients often come for treatment, making a full day's journey. Many are mostly extreme and long-suffering cases, but not being habituated to drugs, they recover with astonishing quickness. The Sevashrama also attends to sick animals such as cows and buffaloes which generally suffer from wounds, worms and foot-and-mouth-diseases. In 1933, 1405 human patients and 493 animals were treated. 5 were admitted in the indoor section. The

management has been able to pay off the debt of Rs. 179-10-3 incurred for the completion of its building last year. But owing to the prevailing economic depression and fall in subscriptions, the work is badly hampered. In addition to the Almora Dt. Board's annual grant of Rs. 100 and a generous monthly subscription of Rs. 25 and an annual donation of Rs. 32 worth of medicines from two staunch supporters, the Sevashram has to purchase nearly Rs. 200 worth of articles yearly, to carry on the work. It is hoped that funds will be forthcoming from the generous public to meet these demands as well as to place the institution on a secure footing.

### R. K. Mission, Ceylon

The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Colombo, is the headquarters of the Mission in Ceylon. Its activities are various. In addition to daily worship and the celebration of important religious festivals and the Birthdays of saints and incarnations, it holds regular classes on Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures. It also maintains a free reading room and library, and a bookstall in the Ashrama premises for the benefit of the people. The Swamis occasionally go on tours to different places in Ceylon and deliver lectures on topics cultural and religious. There was a sumptuous feeding of Daridra Narayanas in connection with the Birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna, and the inmates of Batticaloa Jail and Mantivu Lepor Asylum had their usual New Year treat. Eminent persons from different parts of the world visited the Ashrama and were greatly impressed by its activities carried on in a spirit of dedication and service.

The Mission manages 12 schools and an orphanage. The orphanage provides food, clothing and education for 38 children of whom three passed successfully the Junior Certificate examination. The total number of pupils attending the schools is 2,234 and that of teachers 74. The standard of work has greatly improved as is evident from the reports made by the inspecting officers. The Batticaloa centre conducts 8 schools, Jaffna 2, and Trincomalee 2, one Vernacular and the other English. A class for the study of advanced Tamil literature has been started at Kalmunai. In Trincomalee school the "Rural Scheme" has been adopted and the officers of the Education Department are keen on developing it.

The Ashrama is now located in a rented building. So the pressing need is for a plot of ground and a house of its own with a permanent fund for it as well as for the maintenance of its diverse works. It is hoped the generous public will come forward with liberal contributions and enable the Mission to place all its activities on a solid basis financially.

### R. K. M. Sisumangal Pratishtan, Calcutta

This institution was started about two years ago by Swami Dayananda who had the opportunity of studying first-hand the problem of maternity and child welfare in the United States of America. This is the first of its kind in Bengal where the death rate among mothers and infants is appallingly high. The institution has amply justified its existence by the amount and quality of the service rendered and the popularity gained in such a short time. The Pratishtan is located in a two-storeyed rented building in the suburb of Calcutta inhabited by various communities. It is equipped with up-to-date appliances for hospital and clinical work. In the Indoor hospital there are 7 beds for mothers and 9 for babies. It can accommodate 28 labour cases per month, allowing every mother to stay there for a week. Besides, external maternity service was also rendered by propaganda work through the medium of the press and posters and house-to-house canvass by honorary and paid women workers. Group instruction was given once a week by qualified doctors to all expectant mothers assembled in the lecture room, informing them all about the hygiene of pregnancy, the danger signals the precautions to be taken, the preparation for the lying-in period and other kindred subjects.

Prenatal care from the earliest stage of pregnancy up to the time of confinement was regularly undertaken and Mothers' Clinics were held every Sunday through the able guidance and supervision of two gynaecologists, a pathologist, a lady doctor, a matron and several staff nurses. In the first year 210 mothers received care and 542 in the second year.

**CHILDREN'S CLINIC AND "FOLLOW-UP" OF BABIES:** This is an entirely separate and independent unit but works collaborately with the Maternity section. This is under the supervision of a pediatrician trained in Calcutta, Vienna, Tubingen and Baltimore, assisted by several competent nurses. Baby Clinics were held regularly twice a week. This

section is equipped with all modern appliances for systematic medical examination, including blood and urine tests. Lastly, proper facilities and training were given to midwives and nurses to carry on the work ably and scientifically. The first batch consisted of six young women of respectable families who were provided with free boarding and lodging and given a normal stipend.

**FINANCE:** During the years under review the total receipts amounted to Rs. 31,203-14-6, and the total expenditure under different heads to Rs. 25,602-0-8, thus leaving a closing balance of Rs. 5,601-13-10 in hand at the end of June 1934.

With the expansion of activities, the expenses are increasing year after year. Although the work is being appreciated, the income has not proportionately increased. The management hopes that the generous public will come forward liberally to support this new and useful institution.

### **R. K. Mission, Dacca**

The activities of the Mission during the year were under the following heads :

**MISSIONARY:** It organised weekly sittings in different parts of the city, where scriptures were read, explained and personal doubts removed by free discussion, etc. Public lectures were given by Swamis of the Mission which were largely attended and appreciated. The Birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and different world prophets were celebra-

ted, feeding of the Daridra Narayanas forming one of the main items in these functions.

**EDUCATIONAL:** A free Boys' school up to the Middle English standard of Class V, consisting of 133 students is being run. The students hail mostly from very poor families. So medical and pecuniary help was rendered to them in cases of emergency. A Girls' school was also managed in a nearby village, where free education was given to 25 girls of different castes and creeds.

There is a library and reading room open to the public. This was most profitably utilised by a large number of readers, mostly students of the different schools and colleges.

**CHARITABLE:** An outdoor dispensary is run where medicine was given to 6,023 patients during the year under review. The workers of the Mission nursed 5 patients at their houses and cremated 4 dead bodies. Rice was distributed to different needy persons, and pecuniary help amounting to Rs. 87-9-0 was given to poor students towards the cost of school fees and purchase of books while Rs. 74-14-0 was spent for the maintenance of deserving families.

**NEEDS:** For proper accommodation of the boys of the school, it has become necessary to erect a building with a wall fencing, the probable cost being estimated at Rs. 6,500. The management fervently hopes that the sympathetic public would co-operate to remove this handicap and also to place the institution on a firm footing.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

The 73rd Birthday of Swami Vivekananda will be celebrated on Sunday the 3rd February 1935. The Tithi-Puja falls on 27th January 1935.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

FEBRUARY, 1935

[No. 10

## HINDU ETHICS



चतुराश्रम्यधर्माश्च यतिधर्माश्च पारङ्गव ।

लोकवेदोत्तराश्चैव चात्रधर्मे समाहिताः ॥

प्रत्यच्चं सुखभृयिष्ठमात्मसाच्चिकमच्छलम् ।

सर्वलोकहितं धर्मे चत्रियेषु प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

शेषाः सृष्टा ह्यन्तवन्तो ह्यनन्ता सप्रस्थानाः क्षत्रधर्माः विशिष्टाः ।

अस्मिन् धर्मे सर्वधर्माः प्रविष्टास्तस्माद्धर्मे श्रेष्ठमिमं वदन्ति ॥

The duties in respect of all the four modes of life (Brahmacharyam, etc.), those of Yatis, O son of Pandu, and the customs relating to the conduct of men in general, are all included in kingly duties.

The duties imposed upon the warrior class are plain, productive of great happiness, evident in respect of their results, free from deceit, and beneficial to the whole world.

Infinite were the other duties, with those of the Vanaprastha mode of life, that were created after (kingly duties flowed from the body of the Original God). The fruits of all those are exhaustible. Kingly duties, however, are distinguished above them, since they include them all. For this reason Kshatriya duties are declared to be the foremost of all.

SHANTI PARVA (lxiv, 1,5 & 22)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*The Master punishes Rani Rasmani in his Mood of the Teacher and the consequence that follows.*

**T**ODAY Rani Rasmani herself has come to the temple. Therefore the employees are one and all extremely busy. Even the most confirmed shirker is doing his duties with great care. After bath in the Ganges the Rani comes to visit the Kali temple. The daily worship and the decorations of the image are over by this time. Having paid her homage to the Divine Mother, the Rani sits inside the shrine by the sacred image, to say her usual prayers, and finding the junior Bhattacharya near by, requests him to sing the glory of the Mother. The Master too, sits there and filled with inspiration goes on singing songs composed by great devotees like Ramprasad and Kamalakanta. The Rani says her prayers and at the same time enjoys the devotional songs. Some time is spent in this way when, all of a sudden, the Master stops abruptly and with great annoyance bursts out harshly in a mood of anger, "The same thought, all along? And that, here too?" With this he gives a slap on the Rani's back. The Master is now in the same mood as one finds in a father when he angrily punishes his child for some mischief done by him. But who is there to understand him then!

The temple employees and the maid servants of the Rani, all in a body raise a great hue and cry. The porter runs in high haste to capture the Master. Those servants too that are outside proceed with curiosity towards the temple, being drawn by the loud noise. But the Master and the Rani, the main causes of this disturbance, are both calm and quiet. Wholly indifferent to the noise and bustle of the servants, the Master sits absorbed in himself with a faint smile on his lips; and the Rani is slightly ashamed and gloomy with repentance, inasmuch as, instead of meditating on the Divine Mother, she has been all along thinking to-day of the probable consequences of a particular lawsuit. She is somewhat surprised too, to think how the Master is aware of her mental states. After a while the noise of the servants brings the Rani to her senses and presuming that the innocent Master is likely to be assaulted by the thoughtless people, gives her solemn order, 'The Bhattacharya has done nothing wrong. None of you should harass him in any way.' Later, when Mathur Babu hears the whole story from his mother-in-law, he too keeps the same order in force. Some of the employees become a little offended at this. But what can they do? Therefore thinking that they have



little concern with the big affairs of big men, they simply keep quiet.

*Similar Incidents in the lives of Lord Chaitanya and Jesus Christ.*

After going through this story our reader may wonder what kind of teachership this is. What is this blessed manifestation of the preceptorhood by striking others! We can only say: Read the spiritual history of the world and you will find similar incidents mentioned in the lives of great prophets. Remember the punishment of the Kaji, the beating of Sri Advaita with a view to favouring him with devotion, and similar incidents in Sri Chaitanya's life. Remember again that there is no dearth of like instances in the life of the great Jesus.

Once Lord Jesus along with his disciples came to visit the temple of Yahveh at Jerusalem. The sight of this temple rouses such holy thoughts in Jewish minds as are experienced by Hindus when they visit their sacred places like Benares or Brindavan. Moreover Jesus' mind was always established in the subtler world of thoughts. Even from a distance, at the very first sight of the temple, Jesus was filled with religious emotions and he hurried on to see the Deity. Outside the temple, at the gate and within the courtyard there were many people variously engaged in earning money and in other worldly pursuits. The priests and the guides were more interested in cheating the pilgrims of their purse rather than in helping them in

visiting the Lord; and the shopkeepers were engrossed only in thoughts of making more and more profit, by selling the articles of offering such as the animals, flowers, etc. Who troubled his mind with such thoughts as, 'We are in the temple of the Lord, and near His presence'? Completely absorbed in spiritual thoughts, Jesus could not notice any of these things. He went straight into the temple and was delighted beyond measure by the sight of the Lord. He was quite beside himself with joy to find the same Deity within himself, as the Life of his life and the Soul of his soul. The temple as well as the persons and the objects therein appeared to be the dearest to him in this mood. For it was by coming here that he felt the Divine Presence.


But later, when his mind descended again to the lower plane, when he proceeded to compare the world of his ideas with the external world of facts, he found them to be just poles asunder. No one was engaged in the service of the Lord, the joy of his soul. Everyone on the other hand was mad after lust and gold. Sorrow and despair filled his heart. "What is this?" he thought. "Do whatever you like, outside; but why here too? In the temple itself where God is specially manifested, even here you have brought in the world?" Filled with righteous indignation, in an angry mood, with a cane in hand, he forcibly drove away all the traders

from inside the temple. Brought to their senses, even though only for a moment, they too thought that they had been actually doing a sinful act, and quietly went out. Those souls that were too deeply engrossed in bondage and could not be rectified by mere words, were brought round by the use of the cane; and then they too left the place. But none took offence or ventured to do him any violence.

Persons getting illumination after receiving blows from the hands of the Lord Krishna and then coming to realise Him as God Himself and praising Him as such; or, persons deeply engrossed in bondage, approaching the Lord Krishna with the motive of injuring Him but later being nonplussed simply by His smile or words, and similar facts are in abundance in Sri Krishna's life. Let us however leave aside those Puranic stories.

## ASHRAMAS OF THE PRESENT DAY

### Diverse Types

 ONE striking feature of modern Indian life is the springing up of various kinds of Ashramas in different parts of the land. Moving about for a time in any one of the chief cities, we invariably come across some of their representatives. Many of them are young, but the old ones also are enthusiastic; and if we question them we find that they belong to particular groups or Orders or Ashramas, and are either fully or partly renounced or on the way to do so. Red-robed or white-robed, clean-shaven or wearing beard, half-clad or decently dressed, they are all actively engaged in meeting people and persuading them to co-operate in some cultural movement for which their organisation stands.

Perhaps a temple has been started, where all castes can assemble and worship in a spirit of perfect equality and brotherhood, unhappily

missing in the existing temples. And these cheerful-faced volunteers in the religious line want that we should visit the place and benefit the institution by our suggestions, patronage and support. Or they have commenced evening sittings, where learned people are regularly giving free discourses on useful topics and where the functions are wound up with moving songs praising the Lord and telling us what service would be most acceptable to Him at the present day. Would we not step in, deliver a discourse ourselves, if we can, or attend with our friends? There is probably a free library attached, and those who have a desire can read about the ways in which our ancient culture succeeded in adequately meeting the needs of *those days* and kept society materially and spiritually healthy and vigorous. Would we help the spread of ideas by donating a few select books?

### Constructive Works

The services of these devoted men are not restricted to cities alone. Numbers of them have penetrated into remote villages and are silently engaged in combating indebtedness and other evils affecting the inhabitants, by starting Co-operative Societies and Savings Banks in their midst. Through free schools, gramophone entertainments, magic lantern lectures, and more than anything else, by personal example, they teach the villagers in a variety of ways, especially to ward off diseases by observing the laws of hygiene and sanitation. They also give instruction regarding the care of infants and, where circumstances happen to be favourable, open dispensaries for the free treatment of the needy. They set up Homes for orphans as well as invalids, and do everything else in their power for making life less troublesome and more profitable. Having assimilated what is best in the modern system of studies, these enterprising men have here and there built up workshops and factories and are endeavouring to utilise capital and raw products, wherever available, for manufacturing the important articles of daily use among us.

### Complete Dedication

Their life, however, is to be seen at its best in times of acute distress like those occasioned by floods, famines or contagious diseases. We see them mobilising all their resources at a moment's notice and marching, like true soldiers, into

the affected areas, cheerfully dedicating their life for the protection of the afflicted. Unable to risk so much, those with thinner blood in their veins are sometimes tempted to dissuade them, parodying the words of the illusory lion to King Dilipa, "You do not seem to be wise in your resolution, dear friends, in thus venturing to throw away your glorious prospects in life, your tender youth and comely persons for trifles like this." <sup>1</sup> But they seem to be arguing within themselves in an altogether different strain. "We have evolved to this state of culture," they seem to say, "through many a life, and what harm is there in spending this *one* for the safety of *others*? After all, death is certain at one time or another. Then why not meet it *now* in a noble cause, instead of allowing it to overtake us at an unguarded moment in an uncertain future? If we die in this attempt, we die like heroes and go to the feet of the Lord in whose name we strive; but if we succeed, thousands in whom the Lord abides will feel relieved. And that is an end worth accomplishing at any cost."

### Benefits in the Future

Time, probably, will not be far distant when the purity, selflessness, heroism and guileless tact of these men of trained minds will bring about a healthy change in

1. एकातपलं जगतः प्रभुत्वं

नवं वयः कान्तमिदं वपुश्च ।

अल्पस्य हेतोर्बहु हातुमिन्द्र-

न्विचारमूढः प्रतिभासि मे त्वम् ॥

Raghuvamsam, II, 47.

the habits and outlook of our people in general. The country may then hope to straighten its hitherto folded limbs and march forward steadily along all the avenues of progress opening up ahead under the pressure of modern circumstances. Perhaps we shall be justified in making a forecast based upon the ground already covered and saying that the effects are bound in due course to transcend the barriers of our own land and spread into those of our neighbours. Any signal success in any corner of the world cannot fail, under modern conditions, to attract the attention of all; and sooner or later, institutions which offer solutions for difficult problems affecting the welfare of all humanity are sure to be welcomed and copied with a sense of relief. Do we not, besides, see everywhere at the present day the evils of unchecked selfishness in the industrial, economic and political fields, on an individual, social, national and racial scale? In such a background of suspicion, strife and misery, the brilliant example of unselfish creative efforts of these educated and renouncing enthusiasts must shine by contrast, and tend to create a new culture in which competition would be withdrawn from the fields of conquest and annexation, but gladly directed and vigorously kept up in the fields of production and *distribution*.

### Methods of Work and Training

Leaving aside prophecies and guesses, let us more profitably find out further particulars about this

bubbling manifestation of creative energy. The representatives whom we meet, carry with them printed reports of the work they are annually turning out from their respective institutions. The thoroughness of modern methods is fully evident on every page we read. These workers are not dreamers in the least, for their schemes bear marks of deep thinking and have evolved according to needs. They are also not monopoly-holders in any sense, for everywhere they have sought co-operation, discussed their plans with sympathisers and shared their knowledge and experience with all those who cared to go to them and take interest in their activities. The scope and extent of the work can be gauged not merely from the tabulated sheets and audited accounts but also from the remarks made by prominent visitors and from the photos of the various departments owned by the institution. Here and there we also get glimpses of the training which has made such business habits and efficiency possible in a land where foreign eyes are able to see only dirt, squalor, disunion, superstition and dreamy drifting.

The Ashrama is in fact the very centre of their life, and that this is so, will be revealed by a study of it at close quarters. According to its type, an Ashrama has permanent members who always stay together, as also temporary inmates, guests and visitors who fit in with the policy laid down by the inaugurators. It has its own rules for

admission and expulsion, the best guarantee for their observance, however, being the fact that each member lives all the time under the full critical gaze of the rest as well as of the public. In all cases of Sat-sangam or association of and with the virtuous, this deterrent force of other people's opinions has really been as constant and important a factor as the facilities for copying the good qualities of advanced souls. The inmates of the Ashrama have their common meetings too, in which the discussions centre not merely upon their plans of work but also upon the best ways of disciplining the mind and fashioning it into a powerful tool,—a tool that will without murmur consent to be used at all times, to be broken in the use itself or, what is equally important, to be kept back from work, if so decided upon by the community. The work itself is so adjusted that each will get a chance to develop his special aptitudes without detriment to his general adaptability and at the same time escape from the too common evil of regarding some items as more dignified than others.

### Adaptability

Closer acquaintance with the inner life of each member will show how behind all the external business aspects there remain under control for future discharge, equally valuable gifts relating to art, philosophy or even the prosaic adjustments of domestic life. It is a defect of our present way of imbibing lessons that we can at most work with fair

success in a particular field of activity alone,—perhaps the one connected with the subject we were compelled to study for a certificate at school or college. And if we are thrown out of that line into any other, we often find ourselves helpless and desperate. But it does not seem to have been so in olden days, though we are led, by the decadent state of our society now, to imagine that things were more rigid and miserable then.

To mention just one Puranic example, it is remarkable how the Pandava princes adapted themselves to all the adverse circumstances that befell them at various periods of their life. Although accustomed only to the splendours of royalty, the princes, their aged mother and newly acquired bride spent a happy night in the humble and incommensurable dwelling of the potter. Yudhishtira and the brothers, after their frugal meal got by begging, lay down on Kusa grass with their heads to the south. Kunti laid herself down along the line of their heads while Draupadi, like a pillow for the legs, slept along the line of their feet without grieving in her heart or thinking disrespectfully of those heroic warriors.<sup>2</sup> Later still,

ॐ अग्रस्तपशास्तामभितो

दिशन्तु शिरांसि तेषां कुरुसत्तमानाम् ।

कुन्ती पुरस्तात्तु बभूव तेषां

पादान्तरं चाग्र वभूव कृष्णा ॥

अश्वेत भूमौ सह पाण्डुपुत्रैः

पादोपधानीव कृता कुशेषु ।

न तत्र दुःखं मनसाऽपि तस्या

न चावमेने कुरुपुङ्गवास्तान् ॥

; Vyambara Parva, Ch. 194, verses 9 & 10.

with perfect versatility, they spent their last year of exile by getting employed in various capacities at the court of King Virata. How many of our modern educated youths—what to speak of princes?—would undertake vows first of all, and then faithfully adhere to them if such adherence is possible only through accepting the post of menial servants, of cowherds, of cooks or of dancing masters? And how many, even if they could somehow force themselves into such humble situations, would succeed in performing the appointed duties satisfactorily for a year? To be a cook in a palace, to teach music and dancing, to be a handmaiden to royal masters,—these are not quite easy in actual practice. The wonder is that the military heroes described in our books could adapt themselves with ease in such circumstances and discharge their duties creditably as long as they chose to remain in such low stations.

The inmates of modern Ashramas are evidently on the same track as the heroes of old. Mark what a modern Acharya told his followers about the implications of the life of renunciation." "To go ahead of others in salvation, is wrong," said he, "One must learn sooner or later that one cannot get salvation if one does not try to seek the salvation of one's brothers." "You must try," he began to exhort them, "to combine in your life immense idealism with immense practicality.

You must be prepared to go into deep meditation now, and the next moment you must be ready to cultivate these fields (Swamiji said pointing to the meadows of the Math). You must be prepared to explain the difficult intricacies of the Shastras now, and the next moment to go and sell the produce of the fields in the market. You must be prepared for all menial services, not only here, but elsewhere also."

### **Influence of Mature Souls**

Apart from the original desire to lead a life of renunciation, what other factors are there to sustain these devoted men in their self-imposed vows and their consequent life-long struggles? It is natural for the youthful mind to picture the disciplining of the mind also as a pleasing adventure and to paint all possible relationships of Ashrama life in glowing colours. But it does not take long to sense the reality, the very prosaic reality that one's progress depends upon one's own painful struggles with the lower self, and not upon the simple fact of eating and sleeping in the company of certain people living in particular groups. When some initial shocks are over and the chief human idols of the heart broken, all endearing but weakening relationships get snapped and the aspirant arrives at an important turning point in his spiritual pilgrimage. A constant pressure on his mind then reminds him that he has to fight with the whole troop of his tendencies, virtuous as well as sinful, and at the same time organise his entire being

3. Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, III: "Sannyasa Its Ideal and Practice."

to eliminate all *hatred and shrinking* with regard to the "external" world. But sincere aspirants get over this stage without dangerous set-backs. Experienced men, men who have weathered many a storm in their own earlier days, easily divine these undercurrents in the novice's mind and with a little delicate handling lighten his burdens. And he, in his turn, would ever afterwards cherish, —and transmit to others as tradition—his memories of the days in which the overflowing love of holy men filtered into his life and dissolved his pains. Every Ashrama will prove on inquiry to have had a good many of these saintly men; and it is the presence of this mature type in each generation that makes Ashrama life smooth in the beginning and profitable and sweet afterwards. It is their suggestions and daily life that show the full implications of Sadhana and imperceptibly form the mould into which the novice's personality finds entrance before it assumes its final shape and symmetry.

Ashrama life with its advanced souls and facilities for fruitful Sadhana forms thus the mainspring of all the constructive works undertaken by different groups. So far as the individual is concerned, the Ashrama disciplines him in a two-fold manner: It teaches him to overcome his undesirable tendencies and to manipulate his virtuous ones *at will*. In fact much of the training consists in his being given as many opportunities as possible to exercise his strong points, so that

relatively the vices dwindle into insignificance and finally become powerless to goad him into action.

### Worship through Virtues

The question then arises as to the direction in which the result of his virtuous labours should be made to flow and whether such a course of conduct can be adopted agreeably to the spiritual goal originally kept in view. The answer is supplied by the statement of the Gita that man attains the Highest by directing the flow of his special virtues towards the feet of the Lord.<sup>4</sup> The mind with its natural endowments in the shape of the taste for fine arts, scholarship, philosophy, military manœuvres and the like is "the one lotus"<sup>5</sup> which each man can directly offer to the Lord to obtain His Grace. It is only the thoughtless man who dives into deep lakes, penetrates into jungles or ascends steep hills in search of uncommon flowers, as if the troubles undergone for procuring them entitle him to greater grace. The Lord, after all, is not a remote Entity totally unconnected with the world around us. He is also the Indwelling Lord of all,—of the image or idol, of the elements with which formal worship is performed, of the teacher whose instructions are accepted, of the co-disciples

4. स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ।

5. गभीरे कासारे विशति विजने घोरविपिने  
विशाले शैले च भ्रमति कुसुमार्थं जडमतिः ।

समर्थैकं चेतःसरसिजमुमानाय भवते

मुखेनावस्थातुं जन इह न जानाति किमहो॥

Sivanandalahari.

whose company helps to preserve the correct attitude, of the society which supplies the sustenance, of one's own mind which goes through the Sadhana, and so on. In serving what are normally considered "others", it is therefore the Lord that is really worshipped, and all virtues can be confidently dedicated for the welfare of the "external" world. It helps in achieving the goal and never pulls down a soul from the heights once reached. Even the man of realisation, says the Gita in another place, acts in conformity with his (virtuous) natural impulses. Thus Vyasa codified the Vedas and wrote the Vedanta Sutras and other works, the Buddha taught and organised his disciples, Sankara and other Acharyas preached, Tyagaraja sang, —all even after realising the Highest.

### Country's Gain

In this way, from the standpoint of society as a whole, the benefit is the greater in proportion to the number and variety of the Ashramas that spring into existence. Of each Ashrama itself, the value for society changes in accordance with the

special qualifications of the aspirants who get into it for moulding their spiritual life. Thus while we may expect an artist to develop into a saintly artist in any genuine Ashrama that he may accept as his own, no Ashrama can organise society in the field of art unless some aspirant with such predilections chooses to take up Ashrama life and success fully trains himself to dedicate his capacity for the service of the Indwelling Lord.

This leads us to another important point. With the existing types of aspirants,—and their sympathisers, admirers and friends—Ashramas as a class have been able to infuse a certain amount of life and energy into our land and rouse her up from her long sleep. A greater and more all-round revival will be possible if people with much greater capacities can understand the full potentialities of Ashrama life and regulate themselves,—directly through formal entry into an Ashrama or privately in their own manner—in accordance with its twofold motto, "Renunciation and Service."



# REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

*By A Disciple*

## Practise and Wait

**A**NOTHER day I had been to the Holy Mother's place when a monk came and prostrated before her. He said, "Mother, why does the mind become so restless every now and then? Why is it that I cannot constantly meditate about You? Many worthless thoughts disturb my mind. Useless things we can easily obtain if we simply want them. Shall I never realise You? Mother, please tell me how I shall obtain peace. Nowadays I seldom have visions. What is the use of this life if I cannot realise Thee? It is rather better to die than to lead such a worthless life.

*Mother*: What are you talking of, my child? Do not even think of such things. Can one have vision of God every day? Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Does an angler catch a big carp every day, the moment he sits with his rod? Arranging everything about him, he sits with his rod and concentrates. Once in a while a big carp swallows the hook. Many a time he is disappointed.' Do not for that reason relax the practice. Increase the Japam (repetition of the name of God).

*Yogin-Ma*: Yes, that is true. The name is identical with Brahman. Even if the mind be not concentrated at the outset, you will succeed ultimately.

## Consideration for All

I was in indifferent health for a few days. When I felt better I went to see the Holy Mother. The evening service was over. She was in her bed. Immediately on seeing me she said, "Hallo, my child, how are you now? Are you quite well? "Yes, Mother," said I. She asked me about the welfare of the other members of my family. One of the lady-devotees from Dacca had been staying with her for about a month. She asked, "Mother, shall I rub the oil on your body? (Pointing to me) She is not quite well." The Mother said, "That does not matter. She can do it to-day." When she requested again, the Mother said, "No, She will do it. You may fan me." After a while the Mother said, "That's all right. I am feeling chilly. Go and rest for a while. Have you eaten anything? Take some sweets." In this way, the Holy Mother used to please everybody. The devotee did what she was asked to do.

## The Master and His Ways

*Mother*: (To me) What a nice time we had yesterday. Sarala read about Sri Ramakrishna. How nice those words were! How could we know then that things would take this turn! What a great soul was born! How many people are illuminated by his words! He was the

embodiment of Bliss itself. All the twenty-four hours of the day were devoted to devotional music, merriment, laughter, teachings and story-telling. So far as I remember, I never saw him worried by anything. Often he would tell me nice words of advice. If I had known how to write, I would have noted them down. Well, Sarala, please read something to-day."

Sarala began to read from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. "Do you notice those words," said the Mother, "which he addressed to Rakhal's father. 'A good apple tree begets only good apples'? In this way he would satisfy Rakhal's father. When Rakhal's father would come to Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would carefully feed him with delicious things. He was afraid lest he would take the boy away. Rakhal had a step-mother. When the father came there, Sri Ramakrishna would say to Rakhal, 'Show him everything. Take good care of him.' Thus the father would be made to feel that Rakhal loved him."

Sarala was now reading about Brinde, the maid servant and the story of *luchi*. The Mother said, "She was by no means an easy woman. A fixed quantity of *luchi* was set aside for her tiffin. She would be extremely abusive if that was found wanting. She would say, 'Look at these sons of gentlemen! They have eaten my share also. I do not get even a little sweet.' Sri Ramakrishna was afraid lest those words would reach the ears of the

young devotees. One day, early in the morning, he came to the Naha-bat and said, 'Well, I have given to others Brinde's *luchi*. Please prepare some for her. Otherwise she will indulge in abusiveness. One must avoid wicked persons.' As soon as Brinde came, I said to her, 'Well, Brinde, there is no tiffin for you to-day. I am just preparing them.' She said, 'That's all right. Please do not take the trouble. Please give me raw food-stuffs.' I gave her flour, butter, potato and other vegetables."

### Value of Self-Control

After finishing one chapter, Sarala went away to attend on Golap-Ma, who was ill.

The Holy Mother began in a low voice, "Do you notice this human body? Today it is and to-morrow it is not. And this world is full of misery and pain. Why should one worry about taking another birth? The body is never free from its accompanying troubles! The other day Vilas said to me, 'Mother, we are to be always very alert. We always tremble with fear lest even in mind we think of any unholy thought.' That is very true. A monk is like a bleached cloth, and the householder is like a black one. One does not notice the spots in a black cloth so much, but even a drop of ink looks so prominent on white linen. This life is always beset with dangers. The whole world is engrossed in lust and gold. The monk must always practise renunciation and dispassion. Therefore

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'A monk must be always alert and careful.' "

### Control for Realisation of God

*Devotee:* Well, Mother, according to our Hindu conception, the husband is the most adorable teacher. The scriptures say that through serving him one can go to heaven, and even be united with God. Now, if a wife, somewhat against the will of the husband, tries to practise self-control through supplication and spiritual talk, is it sinful for her?

*Mother:* Certainly not. Whatever you do for the realisation of God cannot have any sinful effect. Self-control is absolutely necessary. All the hard disciplines enjoined upon Hindu widows are meant to help them practise self-control.

All the acts of Sri Ramakrishna were directed to God alone. He

once performed Shodasi Puja\*, making me the object of worship. I asked him what I should do with the bangles, the clothes and the other articles of worship. After a little thought he said that I could give them away to my mother. My father was then alive. Sri Ramakrishna said to me, 'Don't think, when you present your mother with these things, that she is an ordinary human being. Think of her as the direct embodiment of the Divine Mother of the Universe.' I acted accordingly. That was the nature of his teaching.

It was late at night, about half-past ten. The evening worship was over. After the Holy Mother had finished her meal, we all accepted Prasadam and took leave of her.

\* Shodasi, which literally means a woman sixteen years old, is one of the aspects of the Divine Mother.

## ANANDA—RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE.

*By Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M.A.*

### Ananda-Brahman of Taittiriya Upanishad

IN my article on the "Ananda-Brahma-Vada" of the Taittiriya Upanishad, I have briefly indicated, according to my lights, the line of thinking and the mode of self-discipline, by which Bhṛigu, son of Varuna, rose step by step from the sensuous plane of experience and outlook to the higher and higher planes and formed higher and higher conceptions of the nature of

the Supreme Reality, Brahman, till at the highest stage of his spiritual self-discipline and intellectual development he realised Brahman as *Ananda* or Bliss (आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्). The final conclusion of this Upanishad is that Absolute *Ananda* is the *Supreme Reality*, which is the ultimate ground of the existence of all the diverse orders of phenomenal realities of this universe. All these

\*Vide, Vedanta Kesari—May, June and July, 1934.

realities have only derivative, relative and contingent existence, and they all have their being from, by and for *Ananda-Brahman*. It is *Ananda* that gives birth to them, determines their particular forms and characters, regulates their movements and inter-actions, and sustains their temporary existence. It is *Ananda* again that exists eternally as the *Supreme Ideal*, towards the progressive realisation of which all these finite realities move and transform themselves in course of their evolution and by realising which they lose their individuated existence and become one with it. The whole universe is thus shown to be the self-expression of *Ananda*. *Ananda* is its *Substance*, *Ground* as well as its *Ideal*. It is its material cause, efficient cause, formal cause and final cause. The world-process means the mode of diversified and systematic self-manifestation of *Ananda*. *Ananda* constitutes the essence of everything, though its manifestation in diverse phenomenal realities is partial and in varying degrees of quality and quantity.

### What is the meaning of *Ananda*?

Now, what is the true meaning of *Ananda*, which the Upanishad proclaims, on the strength of the deepest spiritual experience of the Rishi, to be the Ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of the Universe? The difficulty of finding out a true answer to this question is greatly enhanced by the fact that *Ananda*, as we ordinarily understand it, is an elementary state of our conscious-

ness, which everybody feels within himself even in the lowest planes of his experience. Being an ultimate fact of experience, it cannot, however, be interpreted and made more intelligible in terms of any other concept or concepts. But it is evident that the *Ananda* or pleasure which we all enjoy at one time or another can in no sense be accepted as the Ultimate Ground and Substance of the Universe.

Does the Upanishad use the term in a technical sense altogether unconnected with the fact of our experience? Or does this familiar fact of our everyday experience possess a deeper significance, which is progressively revealed in the higher and higher planes and which in the highest plane of spiritual experience exhibits its absolute identity with Brahman? Is it possible that in experiencing *Ananda* we really experience Brahman, though under various orders of limitations and conditions and in consequently diverse particularised forms and relative appearances? Is there any reasonable ground for believing that Brahman's self-revelation to our consciousness is imperfect and distorted just in proportion to the imperfection and distortion of the nature of *Ananda* within ourselves? Is it conceivable that when our whole self becomes perfectly blissful,—when the *Ananda* that we now enjoy bit by bit rises to its highest ideal state of perfection with no kind of quantitative, qualitative or temporal limitation,—when it becomes absolutely unconditional

pure, perfect, infinite and eternal and constitutes the entire nature of the self,—this Ananda would reveal itself as the one Absolute Reality without a second, it would cease to appear as one of the states or properties of individual consciousness, and would appear as the one absolute universal blissful consciousness itself and the Substance and Ground of the whole Universe?

### Ananda and Our Pleasure

The Upanishad encourages us to believe that the Ananda, which is recognised in the highest plane of spiritual experience to be the ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of the Universe, is not absolutely different from and unconnected with the feeling of Ananda or happiness that we experience in the lower planes as a particular state of our consciousness. In the case of all living beings it is an acknowledged truth that it is the Ananda, which they experience and hope for in their life, that sustains their existence that makes life worth living and prompts them to exert themselves in the midst of various favourable and unfavourable circumstances for preserving and developing their own life and the life of their race by proper adjustment of their internal and external relations. It is also a plain truth that in the higher and higher stages of development they become fit for enjoying higher and higher forms of Ananda. The type of Ananda that an individual or a species is capable of enjoying and actually enjoys is not unoften re-

garded as an index of the development of its life. The longing for emancipation from sorrow and attainment of greater and greater happiness is inherent in the innermost nature of every living creature and supplies practically the whole motive power which drives it to different forms of activity. The enjoyment of the happiness attained—the sense of fulness experienced within—becomes the source of various forms of activity. Thus it would be no exaggeration to say that it is the enjoyment of, aspiration after and hope for Ananda that constitutes the very essence of life. Ananda, ideal or actual,—pursued or attained—appears to be the principal creative force and ruling power in the world of living beings.

The Upanishad says that none could have lived, none could have moved, if the Ananda which is the ground of the Universe, had not pervaded the whole *Akasa*. (ओ देवानां वाक् कः प्राणान् यद्येव आकाश आनन्दो न स्यात्) The *Akasa* used here may mean either the entire Space or Ether or the innermost recess of the heart of every living being or preferably both. Thus, the life of every being is sustained and moulded by Ananda, in the Upanishadic as well as in our ordinary sense of the term. This implies that the different forms of Ananda, with which we are familiar, are the phenomenal manifestations of the same Absolute Noumenal Ananda of which the Upanishad speaks. These various forms of Ananda, on which the lives of the diverse living creatures depend, are,

in the words of the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, matra or small finite particles (self-manifestations) of the Ananda of Brahman or Absolute Ananda. (एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रा-मुपजीवन्ति)

Thus, according to the teachings, of the *Taittiriya* and the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishads, we are entitled to form a conception, however vague and obscure, of the essential character of the supreme ground and substance of the Universe by the idealisation of the Ananda, which is a familiar phenomenon to us and which plays the most important role in sustaining, moulding and developing our life. It is the same Ananda, free from all possible kinds of limitation and imperfection, that may be conceived as constituting the true nature of Brahman, the absolute ground of all that exists. It is by pursuing the path of the higher and higher forms of Ananda—of the more and more perfect and permanent and unconditional self-manifestations of Ananda,—that we can expect ultimately to experience ourselves as Ananda incarnate and at that stage attain direct experience of the Absolute Reality within ourselves and in the entire objective world.

### Calculus of Brahmananda

In order that we may not fall into the opposite error of conceiving the best possible enjoyment of the sensuous plane as the highest *Brahmananda* and regarding it as the highest goal of life and the ultimate Reality of the world, both the Upanishads have put forward what may

be called a *calculus* of Ananda. Suppose a man is in his full bloom of youth, with excellent health, with 'muscles of iron and nerves of steel,' with extraordinary distinction, eminent position and extensive erudition. Suppose also that his life is surrounded by all the desirable objects of enjoyment, he is 'the monarch of all he surveys' and is free from all worldly troubles and anxieties. In short, he is in enjoyment of the greatest possible happiness of the sensuous plane of experience. His Ananda is called *Manusha* or human Ananda. In the formation of the idea of *Brahmananda*, this may be accepted as the unit of measurement. The enjoyment, which a *Man-Gandharva* is capable of, is a hundred times superior to this *Manusha-Ananda*. The Upanishads go on describing the higher and higher forms of Ananda capable of being enjoyed by the best, the wisest and most virtuous among the *Deva-Gandharvas*, the *Pitris* having permanent abodes, the *Ajanaja-Devas*, the *Karma-Devas*, and the *Devas* worshipped by men. The enjoyment of each succeeding class is reckoned as a hundred times superior to that of each preceding one. *Indra's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to that of the *Devas*, *Brihaspati's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to *Indra's* and *Prajapati's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to *Brihaspati's*. The Ananda which is eternally present in and constitutes the nature of Brahman, the ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of all

existences, is a hundred times superior even to that of *Prajapati*, who experiences the world-organism as His body, and lords it over the innumerable species of creatures in the universe.

In mathematical terms this *Brahmananda* is thus reckoned as qualitatively and quantitatively *one-hundred-trillion times* superior to the greatest happiness that a great man in the sensuous plane can aspire after. It is obvious that no undue emphasis need be laid on the number of classes mentioned as intermediate between Man and Brahman, and in this respect the description of the two Upanishads is not exactly the same. What it is of the greatest importance to note is that the Ananda, which constitutes the essential character of Brahman and which a man in the highest spiritual plane can experience in his own self, is infinitely superior to the particularised, conditioned and transitory forms of it, which a man, even in the highest stage of progress in the sensuous plane, can possibly enjoy.

In the case of *Brahmananda* there is absolutely no distinction between the Ideal and the actual, no effort or process or change involved in the enjoyment, no room for any higher stage of enjoyment. Here the subject and the object, the Enjoyer and the Enjoyed, the Anandin and the Ananda, are absolutely identical, and the infinite nature of this Absolute one is perfectly unveiled to and enjoyed by Himself. There is no element or

attribute in Brahman other than perfect Ananda. Cognition, Emotion and Volition,—Wisdom, Love and Power,—Reality, Beauty and Goodness,—all these are dissolved in, or rather perfectly realised and unified in Absolute Ananda. The presence in any person of any power or attribute or function by the side of and having distinction from Ananda implies that it is not perfected in his character, that it is not unified with the other elements of his character and consequently his character has not yet found rest in its true self, free from all conflict within itself. In perfection Ananda comprehends all and shines alone in all its glory.

#### **Ananda as the Consciousness of Self-fulfilment or Self-realisation**

It is apparent that, according to the Upanishads, the Ananda, which we as conscious finite spirits experience in imperfect, relative, conditional and transitory forms, is not absolutely different from the perfect, unconditional, infinite and eternal Ananda which constitutes the nature of Brahman. The former is the partial manifestation of the latter, and this Ananda is proclaimed to be the essence of our individual self. From the experience of Ananda in its particular forms we may then claim to form a vague and indefinite idea of the Absolute Ananda.

Now, in its particular manifestations, Ananda is the experience of a partial and relative, conditional and temporary, self-fulfilment of the conscious subject. The consciousness of self-fulfilment is the essential

factor in Ananda, and its different gradations are determined by the degrees of relativity and partiality, by the nature of the conditions and limitations, by the depth of intensity and the extent of duration, of this experience:

The conscious subject in the lower planes of existence has a sense of imperfection and a consequent feeling of disagreeableness, which it has a natural hankering to get rid of. This is the moving force that governs all its activities and self-transformations. With the growth of experience it learns to associate this imperfection and disagreeableness with certain conditions of the body and the mind and certain kinds of external objects and circumstances, and also to think that the attainment of certain other conditions of the body and the mind and the acquisition of certain other kinds of objects and circumstances would remove this feeling of imperfection and disagreeableness and lead to a state of relative self-fulfilment and happiness. Accordingly, it imbibes an aversion to those objects and conditions which lead to and intensify the sense of imperfection and suffering, and a longing for those which removes it and produces a consciousness of self-fulfilment and happiness. Sorrow, though appearing in various forms and relations, is essentially nothing but the absence of Ananda or the self's sense of fulness in itself. Ananda always appears to consist in the consciousness of a state of relative self-fulfilment, ordinarily arising out

of emancipation of the subject from objects of its aversion and its union with objects of its desire. The state of imperfection implies that the conscious subject does not appear to itself to be *truly itself*, that it is not actually what it feels it ought to be. The removal of certain conditions and the attainment of certain objects raise the subject to the consciousness of itself as *truly itself*—to a state of apparent reunion with itself for the time being. This is Ananda.

In the lower planes of experience the conscious self identifies itself sometimes with the sensuous body, sometimes with the life-power pervading and governing the body, sometimes with the thinking, feeling and willing mind and sometimes with the ideal-pursuing reason. Accordingly, its feeling of imperfection and pain is principally associated either with the unsatisfied demands of the body and the senses or with the absence of adequate development of life and strength, or with the want of political supremacy and economic grandeur, or with the consciousness of some good unrealised, some truth unattained, some beauty unenjoyed, and so on. These appear to constitute the limitations from which the conscious spirit suffers and which make it unhappy. The satisfaction of the demands of the body, the senses, the life, the mind and the reason, as the case may be, appears in these planes to place the subject in a state of relative self-fulfilment, to give it temporarily a sense of being what it



feels it ought to be, to make the ideal state of its self real for the time being.

Whatever may be the conditions under which Ananda manifests itself, it involves the idea of an actual state of imperfection and unrest of the self, which has to be transcended, and an ideal state of perfection and rest which has to be realised. It consists in the emancipation of the self from the former state and its union with the latter ideal state. The union with the ideal appears to make it truly itself,—to restore to it its apparently lost self. Thus Ananda turns out to be identical with what may be called self-realisation, or the self's attainment of itself.

### **The Essential Demand of the Self**

A systematic investigation into the apparently divergent departments of the nature of all conscious beings has convinced the scientists and philosophers that this nature is essentially one, though there may appear bewildering diversities in its unity. One self, one spirit, one central power, one purpose and design, pervades and governs all the faculties and functions of the body, the senses, the life and the mind. The apparently diverse and conflicting demands of the different departments of nature or the particularised manifestations, under special physical and psychical conditions and limitations, of the fundamental demand of the one self, which seeks to fulfil itself and realise its perfection in and through this world-process.

The self experiences itself, vaguely and indefinitely in the lowest planes, and more and more distinctly and definitely in the higher and higher stages of development, as a finite, limited and conditioned being, and feels instinctively impelled to make efforts for transcending its finitude and attaining greater and greater freedom from the external and internal limitations. It is inconsistent with the inherent character of the spirit to rest contented with its present imperfection and slavery to circumstances. It is driven by its essential nature to make use of all the resources at its command, in the different stages of its journey in the world, for attaining complete freedom and perfection. It is this supreme central effort of the spiritual self to realise perfection in itself, that finds expression in the exertions to lengthen and broaden the life, in the endeavours to unite the particular senses with the objects they long for, in the attempts for emancipation from political, social and economic bondage, in the perseverance to penetrate into the secrets of nature and to bring the force of nature under control. It is this supreme essential demand of the self that prompts thought to develop itself for union with Truth, Emotion to develop itself for union with Beauty, and Will to develop itself for union with God.

### **Partial Self-realisation in Relative Ananda**

Ananda manifests itself in partial, relative and phenomenal forms along with the satisfaction of each

particular demand of the senses, the mind and the reason,—along with the removal of each particular consciousness of imperfection—along with each union of the subject, suffering from the feeling of some particular want, with some particular object that removes this feeling and sets the subject at rest. To view more closely, the object is complementary to the subject. The eye and the *rupa* (form), the ear and the sound, the knower and the knowable, the doer and the deed—all these are complementary realities. Each can be conceived only in relation to and in terms of the other. The two together constitute the true reality. The eye finds itself in its union with *rupa*, the knower finds itself in its union with truth, the feeling subject finds itself in its union with beauty, and so on. Thus, when there is union between the eye and the *rupa* which is its counterpart, the seeing self regains itself and enjoys itself as Ananda, so when there is union between the cognitive subject and the object of cognition, the self finds itself and enjoys its essential character as Ananda, and so on. This viewpoint leads to the inevitable conclusion that in all the planes of experience, the Ananda that is enjoyed essentially consists in the enjoyment by the subject of itself through its union with the object,—in the inner consciousness of the restoration of itself to itself,—in what may in one word be called self-realisation. In the lower planes, this self-realisation is necessarily partial, relative,

conditional and momentary, and Ananda also must be manifested in partial, relative, conditional and transitory forms.

### Absolute Ananda as perfect self-realisation

Ananda reveals itself in its absolute character in the highest stage of the spiritual advancement of the subject. At this stage all the variety of demands disappears, all the variety of objects disappears, all the various forms of attempt and attainment disappear. All these varieties unveil their true characters as the partial manifestations of one subject, one object, and one relation between them. Ultimately the subject and the object also reveal themselves as one Absolute Spiritual Entity. Thus the Supreme Reality is one Absolute Spiritual Entity above all time, space, difference and activity, eternally self-realised and self-complete, eternally enjoying Its own infinite, unconditioned and perfect nature. This is Absolute Ananda,—the only category which can, with any degree of adequacy, give a conception of the character of the Supreme Reality. This is the conclusion of the Taittiriya Upanishad, as discussed in the article on Ananda Brahmanavada.

The conception of Absolute Ananda necessarily involves the notion of absolute existence (सत्यम्), absolute consciousness (ज्ञानम्), absolute freedom from all kinds of limitation (अनन्तम्) and absolute bliss (सः). It involves the notion of the absolute unity of Knowledge with Truth, Will with Goodness, Love with

Beauty, 'What is' with 'What ought to be.' From the standpoint of the lower planes of existence, knowledge, desire and emotion, this is the highest Ideal to be realised, and from the standpoint of the highest spiritual plane of experience, this is the eternally real character of the self and the absolute ground and substance of the Universe.

The Taittiriya Upanishad clearly states that this Absolute Ananda, which is one hundred times superior to the Ananda of *Prajapati*, the Lord of all creatures, and is the ultimate Ideal of perfection to all spiritual beings, constitutes the

essential character of the innermost soul of every individual living being, as well as the soul, the ground and the substance of the universe. (मयश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चायं आदित्ये स एकः) It has also shown the world process to be a harmoniously developed system, in which the apparently different orders of realities evolve out of or are the self-manifestations of this Absolute *Ananda-Brahman* and represent the different stages of Its self-realisation from the absolutely unmanifested (असत्) or potential state to the state of perfect self-revelation. The discussion of this process of evolution is reserved for a future occasion.

## ARE OUR PUBLIC LIBRARIES 'PUBLIC' ?

By K. S. Srikantan, M.A., F.R.E.S. (Lond.), Certi. Libr. (Madras Univ.)

**N**OW that India is on the threshold of a democracy the importance of a movement like this for the liquidation of illiteracy cannot easily be exaggerated. Democracy, it is well known, does not mean merely the elementary education of the child; it means the continually increasing intelligence of the mass of mankind—the continued growth in character and power of all our people. Since democracy means the ruling power of all, it must likewise mean the growing intelligence and the enlarging life of all the people and in this respect a well-established public library is a more significant institution than even a public school. Verily, it is a university of the com-

mon people. A true public library is at once the private consultation room and the sacred confessional to every hungry soul in the social world. The opening of a public library is perhaps the most significant event in the history of a nation; for it brings to the people the inheritance of all the ages and gives them access to that universal life without which nobody can be said to be educated. The school serves us through childhood and youth. But it is the library that serves us through life.\*

Thanks to the laudable efforts of the Punjab, Bengal and Madras Library Associations, the movement

\* W. E. Henry: Libraries and Librarianship.

in India is fast ceasing to be an infant. And yet the message of 'library science' that "Books are for use," and "Books are for all" still remains theoretical maxims. Our public libraries have not been affected by any of these. In fact many of these so-called public libraries have little or no claim to be considered so.

The word 'public' is derived from the Latin word 'Publicus' meaning 'people'—irrespective of sex and age. A true public library therefore is an institution belonging to all the people dwelling in a particular city or a village. It should at once be accessible to *All*, provide accommodation for *All* and cater to the needs of *All*. Tested in the light of these canons, very few libraries answer our definition. If by 'All' we mean (as we ought to) both the literate and the illiterate, then our public libraries cease to be public, for no facilities are provided to satisfy the intellectual needs of those large masses of illiterates, who are yet culturally thirsty. In spite of all efforts, the illiterates form still 90 per cent. of the population. It is indeed unfortunate that directors of our libraries have not yet realised the claim of the illiterates for culture. In the Western Countries, particularly in Russia, the extension activities of the libraries have become more important than even the reading and reference sections. It is quite easy to make a public library useful to the illiterates by organising demonstration lectures, exhibitions and magic

lantern shows. Thanks to the extraordinary enthusiasm of the Gaikwar of Baroda, the libraries in that State are earnestly trying to become 'public' in the true sense of the term. All the other public libraries in India exist only for the sake of the literate section of the population. When these public libraries are maintained by the hard-earned money of the illiterates it passes one's understanding how the illiterate mass can so indifferently be treated; and how a library absolutely useless to 90 per cent. of the population can yet be called 'public.'

Granting that as matters stand at present, extension activities are not possible, it is reasonable to ask whether these public libraries are at least useful to all the literates for whom they are intended. It is indeed strange that even among the literates, only a very small percentage is able to use the library. Educated women have no place in many of these libraries, for neither is there suitable accommodation for them nor literature appropriate to their taste. Unless a woman is determined to trespass on the guarded enclosures of mankind, she cannot find a place in many of our libraries. In spite of the advance in the education of children in the West, India still remains in a pre-historic stage. Neglected by the father, beaten by the mother, and abused by the old teacher with antiquated ideas, the children can almost always be seen in the streets helpless. The public libraries have nothing to give them.

Leaving aside women and children we have the other literates who can take advantage of the library. On account of several defects in the present library organisation, even these are not able to make use of it. The motive behind most of our libraries seems to be that they should be used by as few people as possible. A public library, if it is started with the object of answering to the needs of the literate public, should be located in the very heart of the town like a music emporium or a coffee hotel.\* In my survey of the location of public libraries in several places, I find that most of them are situated in out-of-the-way places. The situation of the Connemara Library in Madras is a case in point. In spite of its magnificent building and size, it is one of the least used libraries. A person who walks all the way from Mylapore or Triplicane to the Connemara Library is often tempted to sleep after reaching the library. The public library in Mysore again is far away from the business centres of the city, while to go to the Seshadri Memorial Library in Bangalore, is itself a great problem to every scholar. In the city of Madura, the Victoria Memorial Public Library is at the westernmost and while the Sangham Library is at the northern end of the town. Besides being far-away the library buildings are so mixed up with other buildings that unless a reader is obstinate, he has very little chance of getting to

the front gateways of the libraries. The Imperial Library at Calcutta—the India's Premier Library—has no building of its own. Several offices are located in a huge building, a portion of which is occupied by the Imperial Library. In fact books are almost hidden. It might be of interest to know that the Calcutta University—the foremost University of India—has no separate library building of its own. A library building as such does not exist in India. Generally, most of the local libraries are located either in the front room of a lawyer's or a municipal councillor's house which cannot hold more than half a dozen weighty people with a furniture competing in its clumsiness with the room. The library building itself is not properly advertised. In the case of the Connemara Library, the advertisement of the Museum authorities is so aggressive that unless a reader is of a persistent type, there is every chance of his returning home murmuring within himself that the library has been shifted. In the city of Madura, the main hall of the public library is leased out to a cinema. Experts as they are, the cinema authorities have taken meticulous care to see that nobody notices the placard announcing that it is a public library. The wall-notice and the huge boards with the pictures of star-actors are so aggressively prominent that people generally say that a small library is located in the cinema hall. It is clear therefore that many of the literates do not know even the

\* S. R. Ranganathan : Five Laws of Library Science.

existence of many of these so-called public libraries.

The utility of the library is still further reduced by its peculiar and inconvenient hours of working. If the object is to enable the people to use the library, it should be open at those hours when they are free. On the other hand, most of these public libraries are available for transactions during the very hours when people are expected to be busy with their work. There are certain libraries which open half an hour after the offices are opened and closed half-an-hour earlier than the offices. The Government holidays are also holidays for the library, so much so, it is only the idlers and never-do-wells that can make use of the library. In short, by its inconvenient hours of work, the privilege of using the library is denied to those who have a yearning for knowledge.

Even granting that on some days it might be possible for the people to make use of the library, the question is whether there are the necessary books. A public library has to serve the needs of both a hotel-keeper and a research scholar. It should therefore have a representative collection of books. I have not been able to find out any difference between a school library and a public library. Undue emphasis is laid on English literature even in public libraries. Good vernacular books are non-existent. To technical men, the library is of no use. Except the novel-reading enthusiasts, others are forced to avoid the

public library. In India, we have still to realise that the message of a true public library should be "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. Enter into the joys of this kingdom where the land is flowing with milk and honey. Drink and ye shall live."

A collection of books is however not a library, but only one of those conditions under which a library becomes a possibility. Only books classified, catalogued and shelved make a library. Few of our libraries have a scientific classification. The catalogues of most of these libraries are often out of date and very difficult to get at. Thus unless the reader is able to approach the librarian direct, he has no chance of getting the book he wants.

The librarian himself is a peculiar creature. In several municipalities, a municipal clerk who also now and then serves as a cook to the municipal chairman is entrusted with this responsible work. Naturally the reader is utterly disappointed with the behaviour of the librarian. This is not the time for me to speak about the qualifications of a public librarian whose responsibilities are infinitely more than those of his brethren in other libraries. I might however point out that he should be the sum-total of the culture of the entire community and by nature but little lower than the angels. He must be patient, but just, generous, gentle, mild, positive and firm.\* It is

\*W. E. Henry : Libraries and Librarianship.

wrongly thought by many that as our libraries are small, men of high scholarship are not necessary. In fact, this, I think, is responsible for throwing open the Madras University Library Course to candidates who have no educational attainments. In my opinion, if there is a place that these people are not fitted to fill, it is just that position. In a small library where this one person must be all things to all people—one who has not only to diagnose the disease, but also to prescribe the remedy—general scholarship is a necessity for efficient work. The fact that the small library has scant resources doubly emphasises the need for a scholarly librarian, for he alone can put the library to its maximum

use. To us in India, large libraries are not indispensable; but we do require efficient librarians.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we have pointed out how many of our public libraries have little claim to be so called. Mention may here be made also of several public libraries which have members paying monthly subscriptions. These look upon the library as their own and often the librarian has to wait upon them. They are retaining the epithet 'public' because, I am told, it helps them to get a government grant. It is time that the associations like the Madras and Bengal Library Associations prevent such questionable methods and make our public libraries really public.

## SRI KRISHNA IN THE GITA

*By Swami Ranganathananda*

**I**T is a fact of great significance that if there is any scripture in the world which has not lost its appeal to modern minds, it is the Bhagavad Gita. The modern mind, let us note, distrusts all scriptures and has lost that abiding faith in the values which traditional religion offers. The full fire of modern scientific criticism has been directed to all the scriptures of all the religions of the world, and the results have been disastrous to both of them. It is becoming increasingly difficult to live on mere faith especially when such faith does not accord with verified truth. There is doubt and questioning prevalent everywhere.

Those minds that have been drawn into the vortex of the conflicts of thought and opinions have lost all faith in doctrines and creeds which could satisfy minds of more placid ages, and are searching for the rock of truth where to rest their minds. There is an insistent demand for a "Philosophy of Life" which requires no submission of the hard-earned critical faculty in man. To such minds, the Bhagavad Gita brings a message of hope and assurance. In fact, its message is fully significant precisely because it offers such a philosophy of life.

In considering the message of the Gita our attention is drawn to the

personality of Sri Krishna, its teacher and inspirer. Among the galaxy of thinkers and leaders which India has produced in the past, to whose invaluable contributions Indian culture owes its distinctive character and uniqueness, the personality of Sri Krishna stands supreme. Hence it is that we look upon him as a full incarnation of the supreme Godhead. This is the greatest honour that we can do to any individual who stands head and shoulders above common humanity. Indian genius understood it and so exalted its spiritual and cultural leaders to the position of Incarnations of God. This phenomenon is happening even in our own times and before our very eyes. Our honouring such eminent personages takes the form of worshipping them as gods, often even in their lifetimes. They are our leaders—these thinkers who stand at the vanguard of our national progress. Such a one was Sri Krishna.

### Two Aspects of Sri Krishna

There are, broadly speaking, two aspects to the personality of Sri Krishna. There is Krishna, the supreme Lord of the faithful and the adored of the Gopis as depicted in the Bhagavata, and Krishna, the teacher and philosopher, who comes to us in times of doubt, conflict and despair, in the role of friend, philosopher and guide, as depicted in the Mahabharata. The Krishna as the lover of the Gopis is so sublime and elevated an idea that it has been more misunderstood than comprehended in its true significance both in the

past as well as in the present. It requires, says Swami Vivekananda, the mind of a Suka to comprehend it truly. We are not competent enough to give a fitting description of that Krishna, neither is that Krishna going to appeal to us of the present day, with troubled hearts and harassed minds. The evil of undeveloped minds in India of the past few centuries trying to grasp and follow this ideal has been tremendous. It is too high for human minds as at present constituted. The Krishna of the Gita is the explanation of the Krishna of the Gopis. Perfection in ethical life as taught in the Gita is the sine qua non for attempting to grasp the first. Let us, therefore, give our patient hearing to his teaching in the Gita.

### The Setting

In the great drama of the Mahabharata the figure of Sri Krishna appears so often on the stage. Various are the parts that he plays, but none so much arrests and holds our attention as that of Parthasarathi. This is because as Parthasarathi he appears most human and acts as friend, philosopher and guide to grief-stricken Arjuna, and we have already seen that this is his individuality as revealed in the Mahabharata. The teachings of the Gita get an air of reality from the tragic setting in which it occurs. Just before the battle begins, Arjuna asks Krishna to place his chariot in the midst of the two contending armies and from that eminent position Arjuna surveys the field and ascertains with whom all he has to fight



Seeing his own teachers and elders like revered Drona and noble Bhishma arrayed against him, Arjuna's strength fails him and he becomes despondent. The first chapter of the Gita portrays this scene in all its vividness. An excessive emotionalism, visible in all its colours, overpowers Arjuna's judgment and he informs Krishna about his resolution not to fight against and kill his own relations and teachers for the sake of mere worldly glory. He would prefer the life of a mendicant and fakir to the enjoyments resulting from such a victory. Other arguments also he advances which appear so convincing to his abnormal mind and shattered judgment that with a shivering body and stricken heart he sinks down in the chariot, giving the ultimatum of withdrawal to Krishna. At this psychological moment comes the vigorous message of Sri Krishna spoken in a few telling words :—

“In such a crisis, whence comes upon thee, O Arjuna, this dejection, un-Arya-like, disgraceful and contrary to the attainment of heaven ?

“Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha, ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies !”

### Accurate Diagnosis

We can imagine that these words of Sri Krishna must have acted like

1. कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।  
अनाद्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥  
क्लैब्यं मास्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्स्वयुपपद्यते ।  
कुत्र हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्वोक्तिं परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

Gita Chapter II, 2, 3.

an invigorating tonic to the despondent mind of Arjuna. Contrary to all expectations of Arjuna himself, Krishna never sympathises with Arjuna's explanation though he is in full sympathy with him for the sorrowful plight in which he is placed. Arjuna seems, at least to himself, to be moved by such high virtues like love, kindness, charity and mercy to his enemies. Incidentally, he advances the arguments of non-violence and non-resistance also. All these seem to fall flat on Krishna's mind. Here Sri Krishna displays an amazing depth of psychological insight and applies, what in modern times is called, the psycho-analytic method to bring calmness into the troubled waters of Arjuna's mind. An initial weakness which unbalances the mind, and a train of high-sounding rationalizations which prop up the first mistake, obscuring it to such an extent as to be beyond one's power of detection : this, in short, is Krishna's reading of Arjuna's mind. The latter's arguments of love, pity, kindness and charity to his enemies betrayed only his sentimental emotionalism, and revealed more the rationalizing process that had set in than these virtues in their true and virile forms. Virtue, with most of us, as it was in the case of Arjuna, is only a deceptive mask which covers from our vision our own weaknesses. When our lives move on evenly and smoothly we cannot realise this. But only when serious conflicts set in, when storms and stresses of life force us to re-evaluate our concep-

tions,—only then do we detect the shaky bases of most of our virtues. It is only when we unmask this virtue that we rise to true ethical life. But this demands the strength and courage of a Dhira or hero. Hence Krishna's exhortation to Arjuna, "Shake off this mean faint-heartedness and arise O hero."

### Solution Here and Now

After applying the tonic contained in the two verses quoted, which must have helped to steady Arjuna's mind to a certain extent, Sri Krishna proceeds to remove his doubts and errors by imparting a knowledge of truth which is the greatest saving factor in life. 'न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते' (Gita IV, 38). Knowledge is the only permanent cure for all the ills of life, and it is only when we are torn as it were with doubts and conflicts, that we are fit to enquire into and receive knowledge of truth or philosophy. Since Arjuna is in such a condition and since he craves Krishna to enlighten him with the truth, it is only proper on the part of Krishna to impart to him a philosophy of life which keeps one's mind steady and feet firm in the midst of one's preoccupations with life's ceaseless activities. "Tie the knowledge of Truth in the folds of your cloth and do whatever you please"—Sri Ramakrishna used to say. Sri Krishna does precisely the same. Life at every step raises problems and it is the business of philosophy to find solutions to them. To this end philosophy seeks a knowledge of the highest truth which alone can give *lasting* solutions to *all* the pro-

blems of life. Philosophical solutions are not in the nature of promises to be realised when life itself has ebbed away. Truth is of no consequence to us if it cannot be realised in this life. A solution is no solution in the absence of the problem itself. Truth, as the Kenopanishad says, is to be realised *here and now*. "इह चेद्वेदीतय सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टि" ॥ (If one knows It here, that is Truth; if one knows It not here, then great is his loss). And Truth is simple enough and can enter life silently without elbowing out any of its other contents, and transform it imperceptibly. This, and not a baggage of outworn and meaningless creeds and dogmas, is what Sri Krishna offers us when we are at our wit's end. If he had done otherwise, it would have become in effect a mockery. As Christ well says: "Or, what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?"

### Firmness and Confidence Restored

To go through life successfully and surmount all its obstacles, what is required is a certain self-confidence. As Swami Vivekananda used to say, "We must have faith in ourselves first before having faith in God". The knowledge of Atman which is our true nature is the basis of all manly endeavour and achievement. With this end in view, Sri Krishna shows Arjuna the true nature of his self, leaving Arjuna to apply that knowledge and the faith derived from that knowledge to the solution of his many problems. This

is clear from the sixty-third sloka of the eighteenth chapter where Krishna says thus:

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।

विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥

"Thus has wisdom, more profound than all profundities, been declared to thee by Me; reflecting over it fully, act as thou likest". That this knowledge had its desired effect on Arjuna's mind is clear

from what Arjuna says in the seventy-third sloka of the same chapter and from his subsequent conduct. Says Arjuna:

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

"Destroyed is my delusion, and I have gained my memory through Thy grace, O Achyuta. I am firm: my doubts are gone. I will do thy word".

## FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

*By Svami Nirlepananda*

### Religion Real Missed

**A**MONG the villagers there are sub-divisions and subcastes to an extent that surpasses the most minute imagination. All the fund of originality and ingenuity of the race seemed to be exhausted and frittered away over devising these inventions and discoveries, wonderfully and annoyingly detailed and apt to bring about our further downfall, degeneration, disunion and utter ruin. The Bāuris or even the Jal-chal (of sanctioned or approved water) and Moirās (sweet-meat-makers) are both types at the two end, furnishing a variety of branches who have among themselves some of the strongest prohibitive laws (endogamic or exogamic) for conducting marriages. The old folk say that even the best swerving or modifying from ancient, age-old customs would pollute their religion and bring ancestral wrath upon the heads of descend-

ants spelling family-disaster. They have not the heart to understand that *religion real* is not a repulsive, deterrent force. It always cements, heals up, re-strings and links up. Like the Sun's rays it is always free to spread. Of course needless to say that we are here not upholding a doctrine of 'no laws in marriage.' In every Society, in every historical age there were and there must always be certain restrictions. There is a way too of weighing the amount of culture in a social unit through the yard-stick of its marriage laws.

The degenerate orthodox social section mostly are never rigid about keeping intact the good old rules of strict morality and continence—Brahmacharya, which is under all circumstances laudable and beneficial. This zeal might have been most appropriate, admirable and worth the nation's best support if displayed in that quarter.

### Conduct When Deaths Occur

In the houses of their relations and neighbours there would be seen no dearth of crowds, merriment, rejoicing and unbounded lip-sympathy in cases of marriage or funeral repasts called *Sraddha*. But these very people would themselves desist from helping their near and dear ones in cases of actual bereavements such as removing dead bodies and doing the last rites. I have seen them on the other hand putting a damper upon, or *judiciously* dissuading from action, young, educated and spirited souls who are laudably ready to trample down unjust, cruel caste-laws,—carrying out the persistent mandates of their conscience to help to get removed at once, epidemic dead bodies or simple dead bodies of those who are labelled *lower* in the Social scale. The inhuman attempt to perpetuate rank coldness and the spirit of non-cooperation, cannot be justified. Actual, practical sympathy with the down-trodden is the only light, the only hope in such a tragic setting. Swami Vivekananda simply panted for this, and stood as a stout champion of India's Untouchables and so-called '*Unwanted*' who are swelling each day the rank of converts. In cases of an epidemic outbreak the picture is extremely heart-rending and utterly cruel.

### Apathy and Inhumanity

An old Vaishnava-caste man had died in an atmosphere of small-pox epidemic. The village air was undoubtedly polluted. And one of his two sons got it. That was the sole

ground why the old man's own son-in-law just in the adjacent village refused to help in his funeral. The other son alone had to carry the body over the family bullock-cart driving himself for want of carrier-men of the same caste. It was a very sorry spectacle symbolising our social apathy and inhumanity. Then there was an additional risk. If a non-caste man's service is requisitioned the Raja or Zamindar would levy a high fine for the fault.

### Muslims' Splendid Example

Let us side by side here recount the human, sympathetic and hearty warm treatment that is meted out by Muslims of the same place upon their race-men in similar sad situations. The latter are not many in number and not very influential as a class. As in all other places they too have four groups among them—the Sheks, the Saiyads, Mughals and Pathans. But fortunately for the Muslims this class distinction has not divided them nor does it ever stand in the way of their actively helping one another in inevitable dark hours of life, in cases of deaths from infectious diseases, not to speak of other instances. Not that, as a community they have no fear, no heart trembling, no nervousness. But the characteristic Islamic Spirit of Democracy, of partnership or comradeship in moments of danger is happily always there to swamp away all weaknesses. The sense of duty or Dharma and mutual inter-dependence and obligation asserts itself uppermost over all selfish and inhuman

promptings of their heart. Civilised Society was really fashioned or formed for this specific purpose. If contrary feelings reign supreme it is not worth its name. It is a misnomer. Sociological studies, Indian or extra-Indian, will always tell us this. A few specific instances will speak volumes for their brotherly feeling. A Mussalman died from small-pox in the village of Khatra. His sons were all minors. The kindly neighbours at once rushed forth into his house and carried the body for burial in the grave-yard. The boys also followed. The scorching summer sun, mid-night rain and storm cannot thwart them. They say that it is quite a *sacred* task. To defer, delay or shrug it off is an unpardonable sacrilege. Let us also recount here one more remarkable case. In a village twenty-four miles north of Khatra another Muslim died one day. Many accompanied his sons and helped to carry the body back again to Khatra to "let the dead man rest amidst the family elders", who had passed away in the latter place. The whole Muslim part of the village, all the male members, practically attended and assisted in the sad function. It is considered as a compulsory act of piety to accompany and assist in a burial—to be done with one's whole heart. Needless to say that it is a very wholesome phylogenetic conception of religion fraught with great social benefits.

#### Hindu Contrast

In contrast to this, when a Bengalee Tamli (*Vaisya*, trader class)

died, a worker in the vineyard of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda had to knock his head repeatedly against the doors of many of his co-caste people to have him burnt early, one of his two sons being accidentally absent abroad on that particular day. But when the monthly funeral *feast* came, there was a regular *crowd* of kinsmen to partake of it with special criticisms on the numerous shortcomings in arrangement and cooking. Be it said, that this poor man died of no infectious disease. The object of forming a society or living in it thus becomes almost nullified as a result of such brutal treatment at that inevitable supreme hour which, needless to say, awaits every one of us in the end !

#### Change among the Young

The young are trying to shake off and discard, for good, all unreasonable and finally untenable prohibitions and social taboos. Young Utkal Brahmins are seen to carry fuel-wood, themselves driving their own bullock-carts to sell them away in the nearest village markets. Brahmin boys are plying sewing machines or sometimes owning mustard-oil mills. In the bus and automobile services, Brahmins, Cobblers, Bauris, Hadis, Doms—are all promiscuously working. Hunger-pinches in the stomach have been the greatest levellers. Regidity and social fashions are all breaking their heads unsuccessfully against the hard stone of economic pressure. Old customs have to give way.

### Difficulties to be Faced

The idyllic picture of villages, that our imagination rears up in towns from the pages of books or newspapers, is all shattered up, when we have to face the uphill task of village reconstruction. The grim reality one has to encounter right and left, inch by inch, moment by moment, day in and day out, is very depressing to start with, if one has a mind to live long among the village folk. But undoubtedly there was some such time when life in villages was something to be desired and enjoyed. We do not mean to uphold the doctrine of deserting villages altogether and trying to flock to the towns *en masse*. Moreover that would of course not be physically and economically possible for the majority of our villagers. We must try to revive, re-create and re-string if we are going to survive as a nation. The shadow is there. The substance has to be instilled. Still the Brahmin boy calls his elder-in-age Bauri neighbour as Manu-ka or Uncle Manu. We must herein remember that at one time the conception of the whole village as a single, compact unit, a sort of a full family—lies behind

all these familiar, endearing forms of addresses. The obvious advantages and benefits accruing from this practical attitude of life cannot be denied. In spite of untouchability, *this* was the only redeeming feature.

But just now, all this has been reduced *merely into words* and nothing more. It does not signify exchange of labours of love and voluntary help in hours of extreme need. One's own blood-related uncle is not attended to, in case of a bad type of illness or death. Litigations and all sorts of party factions are rife—sometimes seething and surging. At Khatra there was a lamentable fracas between two *paras* or quarters of the village which ended in the institution of a criminal suit in the Sadar court and as was inevitable, entailed unnecessary harassment and loss of money to the entire village. It was all due to a vicious rivalry in displaying grandeur during immersion of Durga images. Yet we all know of the ever-recurring complaint of paucity of financial response in life-building constructive village undertakings such as those concerning a well, a tank, a library or a primary school!

---

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

*By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau*

(After a fresh discussion of dream and waking, it is shown how the Jivas seen in the wakeful state, including the teacher of the scripture, do not exist apart from the mind of the perceiver.)

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

In a dream, there is appearance of duality, when through Maya, the mind is active. Similarly, in waking, there is appearance of duality when through Maya, the mind is active. (61)

There is no doubt that in dream, the non-dual mind has the appearance of duality. Similarly there is no doubt that in waking, the (same) non-dual mind has the appearance of duality. (62)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

These two verses (see III. 29-30) mean that the capability of Reality being described (or grasped) by words, is due solely to the activity of the mind (through Maya), which in reality is non-dual and mere Consciousness.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The perceiver in a dream goes about in all ten directions, and always perceives the various Jivas, born of eggs, born of perspiration etc. (63)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Here is shown, that the capability of being described by words belongs to the unreal duality. The perceiver in a dream wanders about in the dream and perceives therein the variety of living beings, born of eggs, born of sweat &c.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

These are appearances presented to the mind of the dreamer and are not seen to be apart from that (mind). Likewise, this mind also is existent only to the dreamer. (64)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

If you ask 'what next?' we reply. Apart from the mind of the dreamer, nothing is known (or seen). This mind alone superimposes on itself the great variety of Jivas in different forms. Therefore the mind of the dreamer can only see itself and is existent for itself. Apart from the dreamer, such a thing as mind does not exist.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The wakeful perceiver goes about in the waking state in all the ten directions and always perceives the variety of Jivas, born of eggs, born of perspiration &c. (65)

The mind of the wakeful perceiver sees those (the Jivas &c.) which are not apart from it (mind). Also the mind exists only for the perceiver in the wakeful state. (66)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The Jivas seen in the wakeful state do not exist apart from the mind (of the perceiver), as these appear to the mind in the same way that they appear to the mind of the dreamer. The mind

formed of the Jivas and their perception, does not exist independent of the perceiver : as is also the case in the dream, where the seer and the seen are one. The rest has been explained.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Of the two (mind and Jiva) each is an object of perception to the other. This being so, which of these can be said to really exist? Both are devoid of distinguishing marks without which, neither can be understood. (67)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Of the two, Jiva and mind, each is an object of perception to the other. From the point of view of Jiva and other objects, the mind gets the name (of perceiving). From the point of view of the mind, the Jiva and others are named objects of perception. Therefore, each is percept to the other (each cannot be independent of the other). Therefore it becomes impossible to say, which, the mind or what the mind sees, really exists. What, do men of discrimination say, exists? In dream, neither the elephant that one sees nor the perception of elephant, is real. Similarly, wise people would be of the same opinion in this case also. How? Mind and the objects perceived by the mind, have no distinguishing marks, affording proof of the presence of both. In the absence of proof, both mind and the objects of perception, cannot be grasped as such. The mind perceiving or the objects perceived, can be grasped (if either exists really apart from the other). Apart from a jar, the perception of the jar is not possible. The meaning is, that it is impossible to distinguish the instruments of knowledge from the objects apprehended by means of them.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Just as a Jiva seen in a dream is born and dies, so all the Jivas here (in this wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (68)

Just as a Jiva imagined to exist through Maya, is born and dies, so all Jivas here (in the wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (69)

Just as a Jiva created by a magician, is born and dies, so all the Jivas here (in the wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (70)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

"Created," that is, by a magician with the aid of incantations and medicines. Jivas born of eggs &c, and such as those seen in a dream or through Maya or created by a magician, are born and die. Similarly, Jivas having human characteristics are unreal and are mere outward manifestations of the mind.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

No Jiva is ever born and to him, birth is unknown. That is the highest truth, where nothing is born. (71)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

It is said that as long as the worldly experience lasts, birth and death may accrue to Jivas (in the waking state) as they do to Jivas in dream. The ultimate truth is that no Jiva is born. The rest is plain.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The duality consisting of the perceived and the perceiver, is due to the activity of the mind. The mind is said to be (really) devoid of relations with objects, eternal and unattached. (72)



*Sankara's Commentary*

The whole of duality consists of the perceived and the perceiver due to the activity of the mind. But in reality, the mind is Atman, devoid of relations with objects and is consequently described as eternal and unattached. The scripture says "This Purusha is always unattached." When there are objects external to oneself, there may be attachment to them. The meaning is that when there are no external objects, the mind will be unattached.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

That which is believed to exist as a result of super-imposition, has no real existence. That which is believed to exist according to other sciences, when considered from the point of view of reality, has also no real existence. (73)

*Sankara's Commentary*

(It is objected). If as you say, in the absence of external objects, it (the mind) is unattached, we say that the mind cannot remain unattached, when the teacher, the scriptures and the pupil and similar relationships are well known to exist. We reply that this is no fault. The objects such as the scriptures &c., are seen, but only as the result of super-imposition. These are true and exist only so long as they serve as means for the realisation of the reality (Atman). But when realisation occurs, they do not exist and are not seen. As the Sruti says, "On realisation, duality is not perceived." As regards the objects maintained to exist by other sciences, even they, when considered from the point of view of ultimate Reality, cease to be. Therefore (the mind) has been aptly described as unattached.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

That which is said to be unborn (on the authority of Shastras) is in reality not even 'unborn.' From the point of view of other sciences, a thing may be said to be unborn, because birth is said to accrue to it (later on). (74)

*Sankara's Commentary*

(It is objected). If the Shastras are fabricated, the statement that a thing is unborn (being based on the Shastras), is also a fabrication. We reply that your statement is true. "Being unborn" is also a fabrication of the Shastras. From the point of view of Reality, there is no such thing as "being unborn." A thing may be said to be "unborn," which from the point of view of other sciences, is said to have a (later) birth. Therefore, so far as Reality is concerned, there is not even the fabrication of anything being "unborn."

*Gaudapada's Karika*

(People) have a fixed belief in the reality of what is in fact unreal and where duality is not perceived. One who realises the absence of duality, is not born (again) as there is no cause (for his birth).

*Sankara's Commentary*

There being no external objects, duality is quite unreal: but people have an attachment to the existence of duality. This attachment (lasts) only as long as it is seized. When duality, the attachment to which is purely unreal and which is the cause of birth, is not seen, then one knows the absence of duality and becoming free from attachment to it, is not born at all, as there is no cause (of birth).

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### An Example for India

A nation like Japan which has risen within the short space of half a century from insignificance to the status of one of the foremost powers of the world must have had sterling qualities of character which have not been made sufficiently well-known to others. India is more familiar with her cheap industrial products and her trading capacities than anything else. Tourists returning from Japan have acquainted us with the wonderful natural scenery of the country as also her patriotism and unique power of organisation. A very valuable glimpse of some splendid traits of Japanese character which has recently appeared in the *Sunday Chronicle* of Madras from the pen of our countryman Mr. V. S. Chari, Judge of the High Court of Mysore, should serve as an eye-opener and an example to this country which is striving to build up a New India. Mr. Chari says that the Japanese have great regard for India, especially as the birth-place of the Buddha and as the country of Mahatma Gandhi for whom they have unbounded regard, but are pained to see India disunited and factious.

### Their Politeness

Mr. Chari speaks very highly of the extreme politeness and sincerity of the Japanese, expressed with due formalities, which is evident in every detail of their dealings with each other as well as with strangers, their highly obliging nature at the cost of much inconvenience to themselves and their unwillingness to receive anything in return for helps rendered. In this connection he

narrates how a farmer returned to Mr. Chari the coins, paid for some peas which he got from him, hidden in the bundle of peas, which were discovered later. Observes Mr. Chari :

"The farmer, apparently, did not want to receive anything from us for the peas which we just wanted to eat in fun. Likewise he did not want to displease us by refusing outright the money we gave him, but with a delicacy, which people in higher position might well follow, he returned to us in this fashion the two coins we had given him. Needless to say, we were deeply touched by his kind act and were only sorry we could not go back to him and thank him."

### Japanese Honesty

But what impressed Mr. Chari most is the standard of honesty prevailing among the middle and poorer classes of people in Japan which, he says, "is much higher than in any other countries we visited. Undoubtedly, there are dishonest politicians in Japan, but not more so than in other parts of the world..... We are not however concerned with this class of people but with the middle and poorer classes of people who form the bulk of the population." Mr. Chari goes into the following interesting observations :—

Until one actually visits the country and acquires first-hand experience, it is hard to believe how honest the Japanese are in their ordinary walks of life. It is sometimes argued that poverty is the root cause for dishonesty, and people who are not in want can afford to be honest. So far as Japan is concerned, this argument is fallacious,

for in Japan, beneath all the glitter, there is dire poverty which may be unequalled even in India. Yet the bulk of people, specially the middle and poorer classes, are scrupulously honest, which is all the more creditable and is due to the teachings of their religion and their training from infancy.

Most of the houses in Japan have walls made of paper, glass-panes or thin planks of wood. The windows have no bars, and the doors are sliding doors without any padlock or means of locking them from outside. Day in and day out these houses are left unlocked even when the owners are absent; yet cases of house-breaking or burglary are rare and unusually small for a population of more than one hundred millions.

At Tokyo we had engaged a small Japanese style house for our stay. Making Tokyo our headquarters we used to make excursions into the interior of the country. We did not want to take with us any extra luggage, and, as we could not leave a servant to take care of the house and our belongings during our absence, I suggested to our representative in Tokyo, *viz.*, the Mysore Government Trade Agent, that he might keep our luggage in his office for safety. His reply was characteristic. It was: "This is Japan. You need not be afraid of your luggage even if you leave it in the house unsecured." Acting on his advice we left the bulk of our belongings in the house at Tokyo and went our way. On our return we found everything as we left.

It would surprise many of your readers to learn that there are no ticket examiners on any of the tramways in Japan, neither on the railways except the ticket collectors at the railway stations. I have a shrewd suspicion that these ticket collectors are appointed more to provide employment to the people than anything else. We never came across any instance of a person travelling without a ticket either on the railways or on the tramways.

During rush hours on the tramways in Tokyo, even though two conductors are employed on each car, tickets cannot be issued quick enough. It was a common sight for a person who reached his destination before the ticket was issued to him to stop the car, go to the conductor, pay the fare, see the ticket was properly punched and placed in the allotted receptacle provided for the purpose. On the Japanese tramways you don't take away the ticket after you reach the destination, but return it to the conductor to be put into the special receptacle kept in the car. If the passenger did not see this was done but simply paid the fare to the conductor, the latter, instead of pocketing the money as in some other countries, would scrupulously take out the proper ticket from his bundle, punch and place it in his receptacle.

But for the innate honesty of the people in Japan it would be impossible to successfully run the huge departmental stores, each seven or eight storeys high, which are in vogue in Tokyo and other big cities of Japan, *e. g.*, Mitsukoshi, Matsuya, Daimaru, etc. The articles for sale are strewn about, and during rush hours tens of thousands of people pass through the stores. It would be impossible to keep any watch over the crowd or stop its members from surreptitiously removing the things without payment if they were so minded. I was told that these departmental stores are not locked during nights, and I can well believe it.

Another thing which makes shopping delightful in Japan is the absence of higgledy-haggling so common in other Oriental countries. Prices are honest and fixed; they are not put up because you happen to be a foreigner or stranger. There is no inflation of price, no opportunity to cheat the foreigner and no bargaining. You know exactly what to buy and what to pay for it. Alas, when we came back to Shanghai and the rest of the places—but that is a different story.

## OBITUARY NOTES

### Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau, M. D.

With great sorrow, we record the passing away, last month, of Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau, M. D., Retired Sanitary Commissioner, Mysore, at Sankarapuram, Bangalore. He had a very amiable and obliging disposition and had the good fortune to live up to

a very ripe old age. He was a vedantic scholar, and of his translations from original Sanskrit we have had the privilege of publishing his valuable rendering of Mandukyopanishad with Gaudapada's Karika and Sankara's Commentary thereon. May his soul rest in peace!

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**BUILDING CHARACTER:** *By Sister Devamata, Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California. Pages 94.*

Sister Devamata is well-known to the Indian public through such books of hers as "Days in an Indian Monastery", "Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples", "Habit of Happiness" and the like. Her latest book on "Character-Building" contains in a nutshell the ripe experience of a life-time. She does not merely theorise in this book but gives intensely practical suggestions to lead us on to a rich field of research—the research of one's own heart. Having herself risen to a high altitude of spiritual awareness, she commands a wide vision and a correct perspective of things and the experiences of life re-interpreted in this light cannot fail to be of great value to those who would climb to higher levels.

As you read through the book, you feel unmistakably at every step that a great and glorious future is waiting for you, and that although long and laborious is the way, ultimately "Man cannot escape perfection." There are great writers who make you feel your littleness and shrink with fear; and there are great writers who make you feel your great destiny and your own potential greatness. Sister Devamata belongs to this latter class. When we think with her, we shake off our fears. "The bondage of our little will breaks; and like an uncaged bird, we mount on high, singing and winging our way through the heavens." N.S.

**MEN BEYOND MANKIND:** *By Fritz Kunz. Published by Messrs. Rider & Co., Paternoster House, London, E. C. Pages 236.*

We know from our study of the laws of evolution, says the author, that "every individual who is born, recapitulates all the life that has over been, reproducing in his earlier years the primitive childhood of our race." If this applies to the past, argues he, why should it not apply also to the future? Religious Teachers, the wisest and broad-hearted leaders of humanity, have appeared at various periods of the world's history and suggested methods to enable ordinary men to experience the "Oneness" of creation. The heights these Teachers attained in one life, the rest of humanity is also sure to reach in due course; and this is going to be the evolution of the future. To this extent, then, the path traversed by the Teachers is the path *chalked out* for us in advance, just as the experiences gained by men up to the twentieth century must appear already chalked out for the baby who is born now and is painfully growing into adult age.

In this evolution, again, it is the child who healthily evolves and "enters into" the ways of thinking of the adult, not the adult who takes him into a Procrustes' bed and stretches him to suit the adult pattern. Similarly, it is we who shall adopt the various steps and healthily grow into the stage attained by the Teachers, not they who will force progress upon us

when we choose to remain inactive. "The Masters obey the rules so fully that they would never think of interfering in our lives in order to bring us to them." There is also "no way by which we can sink hooks into them by which to claim them." "Do you remember how Jesus stood above the sacred city and wept that there was nothing that he could teach to it, because there were no people to make the bridge? Yet, knowing that, He was unwilling to come down and disturb the life they were living. Knowing independence, He cherished it for others." He led the life and preached, but he did not force the pace of others.

Religious life thus involves no mystery and promises no short-cut, no process whereby we save trouble and glide cheaply into a heavenly world for "enjoyments." Neither is it ghost phenomena or "possession" by the Masters of the past. It is solid achievement of mind-control, brought about by hard, patient and sincere struggles with our lower mind and undesirable propensities. This has been made clear by the author in many places, although by his view that the Masters will come down on earth and live with us, when we have evolved, he puts us midway between Christ's coming on the last day on one side, and materialisation of disembodied entities, on the other. Eastern philosophy would go a step

further and, if we so need it, help us to transcend the "separateness" of those "Teachers" as well as "deities."

Leaving aside these ideas about the distant future, when we come down to the actual working of the religious principles in daily life, we find the author making very valuable suggestions. Regarding the first steps says Mr. Fritz Kunz, "We shall quicken our evolution so much that we become no longer national, but international, finally leave behind for a while laggard racial humanity. The first stage is to accept all races—to take in every race without exception and to repudiate one's own, because nationalism means to-day that we think our own nation finer than any other, and implies that we must do everything, possible to see that it comes on top. 'My country, right or wrong,' is a terrible phrase. We cannot believe, if we take the path, that our own country is better absolutely than any other. Every race has something to give, and those who would go forward must step backward in order to start in the right direction, toward unity and simplicity, in brotherhood. This is a marvellous doctrine and we wonder why it is not taught everywhere."

This book is thus an attempt to show how genuine religious practice must help us in solving our present world problems.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. M. Branch Centre, Barisal

The R. K. Mission Branch Centre, Barisal, has been conducting a Students' Home ever since 1927. It tries to impart to the local College students in its charge a true cultural, moral and spiritual training in their spare hours, under the direct control and guidance of the monks of the Order. At present there are 15 students in the Home.

The institution is now located in a few thatched sheds which to all intents and purposes are unfit for habitation. To remedy this, it is decided to construct a pucca building at an estimated cost of Rs. 12,000. A generous friend

has contributed Rs. 1,500, which covers the cost of constructing one room. Those who would contribute the amounts for other rooms may, if they so desire, arrange with the management to have a tablet attached in front of the room, bearing their own names or other names selected by them.

### Ramakrishna Mission Sevarama, Rangoon

The R. K. Mission Sevarama, Rangoon, has closed the thirteenth year of its existence through the grace of the Lord and the kind support of the public. From a perusal of its report, it will be seen that it is doing wonderful work in

the service of the poor and the diseased. Irrespective of caste, creed or colour, medical relief was rendered to all people who sought admittance. A new department has been opened for the treatment of ear, nose and throat under a specialist. The total number of patients both male and female, treated in the indoor hospital was 3176 and the aggregate in the out-door dispensary was 1,50,668 of which 66,053 were new cases. These patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them came from the suburbs and some remote districts of Burma. In view of the increasing demand for accommodation and treatment in the above departments the Managing Committee considers that additional accommodation is urgently necessary for which they are sending their fervent appeal to the generous public for liberal contributions.

### **Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore.**

The R. K. Mission, Singapore, has been doing silent work since its inception in the year 1928. It not only holds religious classes and meetings for the benefit of the public and renders intellectual service by having a library of its own but it also maintains one day school with 44 boys and 45 girls and another night school for the spread of education among the depressed classes. The management earnestly appeals for liberal help from the public with a view to assist them in their undertaking to erect another storoy for the suitable accommodation of the increasing number of children in the school.

### **Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Working Committee Meeting**

The first meeting of the Working Committee was held on the 16th instant last, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmatha Nath Mukherjee. About 50 members were present. A committee consisting of the President, Prof. Bonoy Kumar Sarkar, Prof. Mahendra Nath Sarkar, Swami Madhavananda, Swami Atmabodhananda, Swami Nirvedananda, Swami Sambuddhananda and Babu Bejoy Krishna Bose was formed to draw up a *detailed scheme* and an Appeal and to

report to the Executive Committee by the end of January 1935.

An Executive Committee consisting of twenty-six members, with power to add, was also formed. The Working Committee will lay down broad principles which the Executive Committee will carry out. Several Sub-Committees were also appointed. Mr. Sailapathi Chatterjee and Mr. Surendra Nath Chakravarti were appointed Secretaries of the Finance Committee, Swami Avinashananda of the Publication Sub-Committee, Mr. S. C. Roy, of the Publicity Committee, Swami Dayananda and Swami Vimutkananda of the Foreign and Provincial Celebrations Sub-Committees, Swamis Gangesananda and Nityaswarupananda of Conferences and Convention at Allahabad Sub-Committees, Swami Virajananda, Secretary of the Permanent Memorial Sub-Committee. A Ladies' Sub-Committee was also formed.

It was announced that in addition to those already elected the following have also agreed to become Vice-Presidents, *viz.*, Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sir J. C. Bose, Mr. M. R. Jayakar (Bombay), Sir P. C. Roy, Sir (Dr.) Nilratan Sarkar, Hon'ble Sir Bejoy Prasad Singh Roy, Sir Radhakrishna of Andhra University, Babu Ramanand Chatterjee, Raja Sir M. N. Roy Choudhury of Santosh, Maharaja of Cossimbazar, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Dwaraknath Mitra, Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. N. Guha and Sir Hari Shankar Paul.

The question of reducing the scale of membership fee for college and school students was referred to the Finance Committee.

The office of the Centenary Committee will henceforth be located in a room on the first floor of the Albert Institute, 15, College Square, and all Committee Meetings will be held in the Albert Hall.

It was decided to deposit all cash and cheques received, by opening accounts in the name of the Centenary in the Banks, Bengal Central Bank and Central Bank of India, and the Treasurer, Mr. J. C. Das and either Babu Bejoy K. Bose or Swami Sambuddhananda to jointly sign cheques for making withdrawals.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

MARCH, 1935

[No. 11

## HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

सत्यं सत्सु सदा धर्मः सत्यं धर्मः सनातनः ।  
सत्यमेव नमस्येत सत्यं हि परमा गतिः ॥  
सत्यं धर्मं स्तपो योगः सत्यं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।  
सत्यं यज्ञः परः प्रोक्तः सर्वे सत्ये प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥  
सत्यश्च समताचैव दमश्चैव न संशयः ।  
अमात्सर्यं क्षमा चैव ह्रीस्तित्तिचानसूयता ॥  
त्यागोऽयानमथार्थत्वं धृतिश्च सततं दया ।  
अहिंसा चैव राजेन्द्र सत्याक्राशास्त्रयोदश ॥

Truth is always natural with the Good. Indeed, Truth is an eternal duty. One should reverentially bow unto Truth. Truth is the highest refuge.

Truth is duty ; Truth is penance ; Truth is *yoga* ; Truth is the eternal Brahman. Truth is said to be Sacrifice of a high order. Everything rests upon Truth.

The forms that Truth assumes are impartiality, self-control, non-rivalry, forgiveness, modesty, endurance, absence of jealousy, renunciation, contemplation, nobility, fortitude, compassion and abstention from injury.

SHANTI PARVA (CLXII, 4, 5, 8 & 9)

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

*The Master's unique Method of Teaching under the influence of the Preceptor's Mood, and the great luck of Rani Rasmani.*

THE incident of giving a blow to Rani Rasmani in the Kali temple is a living instance of how the Master would completely forget himself in his dealings with others under the influence of the mood of the teacher. If one goes deep into the matter, he will find the event to be not a very small affair. For, where was the Master, an insignificant priest living on an humble salary, and where was Rani Rasmani whose extraordinary wealth, sense of honour, patience, courage and power would astound even the leading men of her time! Naturally a poor Brahmin like him will not have the courage even to approach her. Or if ever by accident, he happens to meet her at close quarters, he will consider himself highly fortunate if he can please her a little by flattery or by any other means, and will seek opportunity for it. But what happened was just the contrary. It was not merely a verbal protest against her improper behaviour, but regular physical punishment! Viewed in relation to the Master's position, it was not a matter of small wonder. Considering the high social status of the Rani too, it was a highly significant fact that an outburst of anger, a sense of

humiliation, a passion for taking vengeance—none of these arose in her mind. But, as we have already stated, when the attitude of the preceptor appears in great men through the Cosmic Ego transcending all selfish limitations, willy nilly, common men must bow down to them. What then to speak of the ready submission of such pure characters as the pious Rani? The reason for this is that the human mind limited within the narrow range of its selfish end, is lifted above on such occasions by their power and grace and is made to understand spontaneously that its true good lies in doing what it is commanded to do. Hence there remains no other alternative but to carry out the orders. There is also another point of importance here. As the Master would say, "None can become great in any way or assimilate extraordinary wealth, honour, power, etc., (*i.e.* maintain his balance even when these are in his possession and therefore do not misuse them through his intense pride) unless there is a special manifestation of Divine powers in him." It was because the pious Rani had in her such divine powers that she could receive the grace of the Master in the mood of the teacher, manifested in such a rude form though it was. The Master used to say, "Rani



Rasmani is one of the eight friends (symbols of power) of the Divine Mother, incarnated on earth for preaching Her worship. The seal she used on her legal documents bore the inscription, 'Sreemati Rasmani Dasi, desirous to attain the feet of Kali (the Divine Mother).' Thus in every action of the Rani, there was the mark of her firm devotion to the Divine Mother."

*Descriptions of the persons whose minds have become absorbed in God, as found in the scriptures.*

Moreover scriptures mention various kinds of behaviour of those persons whose minds are absorbed in God. Acharya Sankara gives a beautiful description in his *Veveka-chudamani*: "Of those perfected souls that have got their desires fulfilled by attaining the highest knowledge or God-realisation, some go about in the world stark naked, with knowledge as their only covering, while some others put on barks of trees or usual clothes like common men; some behave like lunatics, while some others look like children who are outwardly free from all taints of lust and other passions, or like veritable devils, utterly devoid of all sense of cleanliness.

*Why it is so very difficult to understand the conduct of great leaders and specially of Sri Ramakrishna.*

Being constantly united with the Cosmic Ego, they are viewed as such by ordinary men. But it is through them alone that the Teacher-aspect of God, that dispels the darkness of ignorance, can find

special manifestation. The reason, as has already been stated, is that the Teacher-aspect of God manifests for the good of the world along with the destruction of the limited selfish ego and the consequent appearance of the Cosmic Ego pervading the whole Universe. Of the illumined souls those specially who are always in the role of the preceptor or the seer, have to keep a show of their firm devotion to the good, and an utter disgust for the evil—a regard for purity, steadiness, self-control, reason, scriptural knowledge or scholarship and all such things, like ordinary men, according as their environments require. They have to keep a *show* of these things, we say, because, although they are in full possession of the knowledge of the absolute unity of right and wrong, virtue and vice, merit and demerit and all existences within the domain of Maya, from the point of view of Brahman, the one without a second, nevertheless they maintain a semblance of variety with the object of showing others the way out of this world of ignorance. If even the ordinary preceptors or seers have to live very often in this way for the good of others, what to say, then, of the incarnations of God or the world teachers! Hence it is so very difficult for ordinary men to understand them. And it is specially so with regard to the conduct of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of the modern era. For, the divine powers that are so far mentioned in the scriptures to have had their outward

manifestation in the previous incarnations, were so much hidden in him that unless one had a genuine thirst for the truth, and unless one could be closely related with him through his grace, merely from superficial observation on a few occasions, there was no possibility of their presence being known at all. See, for instance, what external qualification he had in him that might attract you? Learning? He was almost an illiterate? And how can you know that by the virtue of his superhuman memory he had fully mastered the Vedas, the Vedantas and all the other scriptures? Will you recognise him through his intelligence? What intelligence can you expect in one who always thinks, "I am nothing, I know nothing. My Mother knows everything!" And even if you go to take his counsel in any matter, when he will say, "Ask the Mother; She will tell you," will you be able to keep your faith in such an instruction and act accordingly? You will rather think, "What a nice piece of advice indeed. This simple thing we are hearing from the time we have begun to

read the very first primers which teach us, 'God is of the nature of Consciousness, formless, Omniscient, and All-Powerful. He can make one understand everything if He so pleases.' But can we depend on such instructions in our practical life?" Will you find out his greatness from his wealth or name and fame? The Master himself possessed very little of these things. And moreover it was his very first instruction to renounce them altogether. Similar difficulties are there in all other matters too. The only traits in him that would manifest his greatness and draw people towards him were his purity, his devotion to God and his self-less love. If you feel attracted by these, well and good; if not, he is far beyond the limits of your understanding. Hence we say, it was not a matter of small fortune for Rani Rasmani that she was able to recognize the teacher aspect in the Master, although it was manifested so very rudely, and that she became truly blessed by carrying in her mind the teaching imparted with so much severity, without throwing it overboard from pride and egotism!

---

## A MESSENGER OF LIGHT

### The Place of God-men in Life

**A**MONG the deep mysteries that perplex the mind of man there is perhaps none so elusive as the problem of his very existence in the world. His life is like a patch of light in an all-encompassing expanse of darkness. The source of his being extends to its impenetrable gloom at one end, while the fate that awaits him after the event called death is also buried in the equally dense shroud of darkness at the other end. Between these two expansive masses of darkness is spread out, as it were, the little patch of light called our earthly life to which every one of us clings with passionate attachment in spite of the uncertainties attendant on it and our incapacity to discover its real significance. In the mad rush for the trifling things that sweeten his little day, man ignores the unsubstantial foundations on which the whole enterprise is based. He overlooks the utter meaninglessness of his strivings, the palpable absurdity of his earnestness in matters pertaining to this nine day's wonder called life, about whose origin, end and object he is content to remain in a state of blissful ignorance.

Is the mental gaze of man then strictly debarred from getting an insight into the mysteries of the beyond? Is he bound to live pre-occupied wholly with the fleeting

phantoms of this mundane existence, with no chances of gaining a view of life in its totality and understanding its true significance? While the majority of men are satisfied with the worthless sweets that Dame Nature sets before them and never take a thought of the beyond, a few intrepid souls there are who refuse to be drawn and enslaved by the allurements of life. They battle with the forces that keep their attention rivetted on the charming face of life and succeed eventually in turning it towards the darkness that hides the secrets of existence from their view. Before the light of consciousness thus withdrawn from the trivialities of life and focused on the darkness beyond, that seemingly impenetrable shroud of nescience dissolves, laying bare before the seer's illumined gaze those supreme secrets whose ignorance had rendered life quite devoid of all significance.

Few and far between are such seers, but when they do appear in the world, the trails of glory they light up in their meteoric course illumine the labyrinthine passages of life and bring a new light and guidance unto the weary pilgrims trudging along their winding courses. These harbingers of light, the world calls prophets and incarnations, and to them it turns in worshipful reverence for a solution of the deep moral and spiritual problems

distracting its mind. In the month of March this year falls the birthday anniversary of one such—Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna—whose life of matchless purity and unparallelled spiritual realisations has filled the minds of many of us with a new hope and a new enthusiasm in facing the problems with which life confronts us at every turn. We shall therefore devote ourselves to some reflections on the life of this god-man whom many of us look upon as a veritable embodiment of the Supreme Being, come in a human form to live in our midst, participate in our joys and sorrows and inspire us with the sublimity of his life and teachings.

### **The Secret of His Greatness**

Judging from the external point of view there was perhaps none among the noted personages of the 19th century, who was less qualified than Sri Ramakrishna to draw the worshipful reverence of large numbers of men. Unimposing in appearance, uneducated in the lore of either the East or the West, possessing the favours of neither fortune nor power, he was for all outward appearance nothing more than one among the countless Hindu devotees who spend their quiet and uneventful life in the sacred precincts of a temple of God. Yet there was a fire enshrined in him, a magnetic power encircling his personality, before whose irresistible influence even the greatest men of his times were forced to bend their heads in worshipful reverence. Nay, that power emanating from him was

destined to outlive his mortal frame, and exercise its potent influence on the minds of generations yet unborn. What could possibly be the secret of this power, what the explanation of this ever-widening influence? If intellectual capacity and far-seeing statesmanship were that, there was, among the great men of his times, Ram Mohun, hailed as the morning star of Indian Renaissance, a master of several languages, an heir to the best culture of both the East and the West, a patriot and social reformer whose virile thought could grasp within its sweep every national and social problem confronting his country. If aristocratic dignity and mature wisdom could achieve this, there was the famous Maharshi Devendranath Tagore among the spiritual leaders of the times, beside whom an uneducated, frail plebeian like Ramakrishna must pale like a star before the moon. If soul-stirring eloquence and majestic power of personality could possibly be the secret of this power, then there was Keshub Chunder Sen, the idol of the youth of his day, whose silvery eloquence and transparent sincerity thrilled the West as it did the East.

All these popular leaders of Ramakrishna's age were undoubtedly great men, and in point of learning, culture, eloquence, and worldly wisdom they were his superiors. But there was something which all of them lacked, and that something Ramakrishna had in abundance in spite of his deficiency in many of the other equipments that make for greatness in the world. He possessed a

spiritualised and illumined intelligence which could see through the mask of this world and discover the secret of existence which eludes the comprehension of even the widest range of learning, which no wealth can purchase or any position or power hope to acquire. Our wise men learnedly talk on it and try to entrap it in the meshes of conceptual thinking. But intellectual sallies, however well-planned and well-equipped from our worldly point of view, are too feeble to cross the strongly entrenched lines of nescience, unless they receive the backing of a mental disposition that is freed from every vestige of animality and has come to the conviction that the highest value in life consists not in the petty prizes of its brutal conflicts but in the discovery of life's secret which baffles even the most desperate attempts of worldly wisdom. In this latter equipment Ramakrishna was richer than any of his contemporaries. A mere bread and butter winning education he abhorred from the bottom of his heart, and a cleverness consisting in the capacity to swell the bank account was no cleverness in his eyes. According to him true wisdom consists in the power of discrimination, in the capacity to distinguish the genuine values of the soul from the countless varieties of imitation stuffs and counterfeit commodities that life's thronging fair offers unto the listless mind of man. No man there was in his age who was his compeer in this precious gift, and hence there was none among his

contemporaries whose life was as rich as his in the romance of the soul. While most of them floundered or fell back under the weight of those very gifts that made them great in the popular esteem, he, unencumbered by such superfluities, flew straight up into the empyrean heights of God-realisation on the soul's swift wings of devotion and discrimination. The heart of Reality was revealed to him in so tangible a manner that he is described in popular language as having seen God face to face. Among his great contemporaries he stands as the solitary example of a man who could give an unhesitating and decisive reply to the anxious query whether he had seen God—the reply that he had not only seen Him but was every moment experiencing Him in a sense more real than the face of the questioner himself. In an age when the advancing tide of scientific research was doing havoc with the faith of even the professed leaders of religion, when a master-mind like Tennyson could, by his utmost efforts, have only occasional flashes of faith preceded and followed by the utter darkness of scepticism, when the spiritual convictions of Browning, the most optimistic thinker of his day, could find no more secure basis than the shifting sands of pure intellectualism, when a Spencer after all his intellectual jugglery could arrive at nothing more positive than the shadowy conception of the unknown—this clear and unambiguous answer of the humble priest of

Kali that God is more real than even the most tangible objects of the world, that He can be experienced as the fountain-head of all Reality comes as the most powerful criticism as yet offered of the vanity that man calls learning, of the modern man's exaggerated reliance on science for a solution of life's mystery.

### **The Concept of God-Realisation**

This statement of Sri Ramakrishna that God can be seen, and his claim that he had come face to face with Him are likely to leave many of us rather perplexed than convinced of the existence of a super-sensual Reality. What is meant by seeing God? Is He the prototype of a natural scenery or a human form that one can speak of seeing Him? What guarantee is there that the God one is supposed to have seen is nothing more than the imaginings of a feverish brain? In a sophisticated age like ours such questions are likely to be raised in regard to the concept of God-realisation when it is put in a naive and concrete form as above. We may say with certainty that seeing God is not the same as seeing objects of the world with our fleshy eyes; for in mystic vision the external eyes may remain closed and yet the experience may be more vivid than anything we know of in life. At the same time it is to be distinguished from dream, the reality of whose objects are confined to that state and does not extend beyond it. God-vision leaves its permanent impress on our consciousness, and its vali-

dity is self-evident to the experiencing consciousness in a manner that precludes all possibilities of doubt. In fact the common expression 'seeing God' is applied to it because the most concrete and indubitable forms of reality known to us in ordinary life are experienced through sense contacts, and the sense-bound human mind can therefore offer no better description of an unquestionably real experience than through expressions drawn from sensuous life. It is therefore its reality value, its pressure, as it were, on consciousness, that is signified by the common expression 'seeing God' in relation to this experience.

In other respects it is not 'seeing' or sensing in any form. It is of the nature of an illumination and expansion of consciousness. When an ordinary unenlightened human being thinks of himself or sees the world spread around him, he feels that they are all autonomous entities with no significance transcending them. The human personality appears to be nothing more than a bundle of living matter, and the things around are only inert aggregates of the same stuff which may be viewed as either useful, indifferent or prejudicial to the interests of life. Except for their serviceableness in the matter of ministering to the little loves and hates, the petty desires and aversions engendered by the bitter struggle of life, the world-bound mind finds no ultimate significance in any of the objects that it comes across in life. Life

itself is valued for the thrills it affords the organism, for the prospects it offers of satisfying the appetites of the body and the ambitions of the mind. Thus the life of the world is one of confined vision and distorted outlook, revealing experience only in partiality and valuing things only for their serviceability for the moment. It is a view which would appear extremely grotesque and repulsive, had it not been for the artificial significance with which we colour it owing to our participation in life's bitter struggle.

God-vision is just the reversal of this view of experience. It gives a new orientation to life, a new perspective of Reality, as a result of which the hitherto self-sufficient and manifold is seen in its collectivity as the expression of an Intelligence. The partial, broken bits of experience, limited by their own being, are now seen as self-transcending in their significance, pointing towards that Intelligence from which they derive their being and in whose all-encompassing thought they subsist. The picture of life which appeared so unsymmetrical, ugly and grotesque before, because it was laid bare to the vision only in parts and in patches, is now exposed in its entirety before the enlightened vision of the sage, revealing all its wealth of beauty and meaning, and conferring the highest form of peace and bliss. The previous view of the world as a product of chance, where power, wealth and satisfaction of the senses

are the ends in view, and might, cunning and selfishness the means for the same, is now transformed into a scheme where law and justice predominate under the guidance of a moral purposiveness. The meaningless becomes meaningful, the transient changes into the Eternal, the trivial puts on the glory of Everlasting values. Life which looked valueless before as a line of zeroes without any numerical digit at the head, assumes now a tremendous significance on the discovery of that value-giving entity at the back of it. The inertness, the sinfulness and the ugliness characterising life at the material level are recognised as nothing more than a thin veneer over what is essentially the True, the Good and the Beautiful. The contradictions of logic and the conflicts of ethical life stand resolved in the light of a transcendental illumination. The heart of Nature and the spirit of man, in place of being opposed to each other, are seen to be fused in a Supreme Intelligence which forms the common background of both. The whole of Nature thereby loses its otherness and becomes suffused by the principle of self—self that has lost its sense of separateness owing to the recognition of its essential kinship with the Supreme Intelligence whose expression in space and time constitutes the world we see around us.

### **Seeing God in Everything**

In recent times Sri Ramakrishna's is the most glorious example of a

life in which this transformation of outlook and values called God-realisation was achieved with the most remarkable success. A student of his life is rather puzzled to note how his mind was always oscillating between consciousness at the physical level and the state of Samadhi in which the mind soars into the various super-sensuous planes of existence. But whether in Samadhi or in the normal waking consciousness he always perceived the world of experience as an expression of Divine glory. In his eye there was not even a particle of dust without the sustaining power of the omnipotent, divine Intelligence at its back. As through a sheet of glass, his enlightened vision could pierce through the mask of the world and come into intimate touch with its underlying essence of Bliss and Intelligence. To his transfigured vision every flower plant in bloom was an offering of nosegay unto the Lord, every form of activity a sacrifice unto Him, and every living being an embodiment of Narayana Himself. "Do you know what I see!" he declared, "I see Him as All. Man and other creatures,—they appear as veritable figures skin-bound—with the Lord within,—shaking the head or moving the hand and feet! I had once a like perception—one Substance, I felt, had taken the form of the Cosmos with all living creatures; like a house of wax, with gardens, roads, men, cows and the rest, all made of wax and nothing but wax! I see, I realise, that all the three come

from one Substance—the victim to be sacrificed, the block for sacrifice and he who cuts down the victim for sacrifice." His daily life was thus cast in a plane of thought where the distinction between matter and spirit, between God and man could hardly be felt, even as it is impossible to distinguish between the waters of the ocean and the river at the point where they meet. Literally he saw the Divine Intelligence playing the game of hide and seek with Itself behind the veil of Its material manifestation.

### Personal Manifestation of the Divine

His vision of the Divinity was not however confined to the vision of Him as the support and substratum of all that exists. Like an expert musician, who with perfect ease rises up from a lower note to a higher one and comes down from a higher to a lower note, he traversed every plane of spiritual experience centering round this transfigured vision of existence as a whole. Now his mind would soar up in the contemplation of Krishna as the cow-herd boy, as the beloved of the Gopis, as the Gita-Acharya, or as the restorer of Dharma; now his consciousness would be absorbed in the thought of Rama, the Lord incarnate on earth, who exemplified in his life how an ideal son, husband, friend and ruler of men should live; now it might be that his whole being got enthralled by the sublimity and majesty of God as the Divine Mother of the Universe conceived



in diverse forms of sweetness, grandeur and awe-inspiring splendour. In the same way he exhausted every form of personal relationship in pouring out his heart's love for the Supreme Being whom he looked upon, as ideal Bhaktas do, not as a mighty far-off being creating, preserving and destroying the universe, but as one who was his own, bound by a nearer, dearer and purer relationship than any possible in worldly life. The Deity was for him a dutiful Master, an affectionate Father, a loving Mother, an intimate Friend, a darling Child, and a loving Husband and Sweetheart—in fact all the channels through which worldly affection flows met together in him as a mighty current hurling its waters towards the Supreme Being and finding its fulfilment in a Deity who thirsts for and requits the love of the devoted heart. The attachment of a miser for his hoarded wealth, the affection of a mother for her only child, the love of a chaste wife for her husband—when the force of all these forms of love are put together, that, he said, would give one a hazy idea of the mighty power of attraction he felt towards the Lord.

### Seeing God in Commonplace things

A still more remarkable feature of his state of God-consciousness was that not only suggestions admittedly holy but even others, either having no such associations or even antagonistic to spiritual upliftment, helped only to drive his mind along one path or other of the spiritual

firmament. His longing for the company of pure and devoted young men like Narendra and Rakhal was excelled only by the attraction he felt for God; and when he was warned that his attachment for these young men might cause his spiritual downfall, a flash of illumination suddenly revealed it to him that it was not their earthly faces but the Narayana in them that attracted him, and that if the lustre of the Divine got contaminated any day by impure living, it would not be possible for him even to look at their faces. The casual sight of a boy standing under a tree with one leg crossed against the other put him into such a vivid consciousness of Sri Krishna that he got at once absorbed in Samadhi. At the sight of the lion in the zoo, he was absorbed in the consciousness of the Divine Mother whose vehicle is the lion. Even suggestions that evoke disgust or evil ideas in ordinary minds had quite the contrary effect on him. A company of drunkards, reeling under the influence of liquor, reminded him only of the state of divine intoxication in which his mind at once got absorbed. Even at the sight of street-walkers and women of ill-fame, his mind would react in a manner quite different from that of ordinary men and be reminded vividly of the Divine Mother whose special manifestation he saw in all members of the opposite sex, irrespective of their character and position in life.

Short-sighted critics have often found fault with this disposition

of Sri Ramakrishna to identify even such worldly objects with the Divinity and pass into the ecstatic state of God-consciousness at the sight of things and persons that either evoke no feeling at all or call up positive disgust and resentment in the minds of the so-called spiritual and moral men of this world. The mistake of such critics consists in overlooking the exalted spiritual condition of Sri Ramakrishna and consequently appraising him by standards formed by the observation of men who are mere babies in spiritual life. In the case of one who could penetrate through the mystery of the world and feel the Divine Principle forming its substratum, with as much vividness as the worldling experiences the objects of sensuous life, what wonder is there if he saw God and God alone even in the trivialities and obscenities of the world? How great is the

gulf of difference between our sense-bound minds capable of thinking only in terms of selfish gains and worldly attainments, and the mind of Sri Ramakrishna which saw the face of God behind every aspect of Nature? Where our superficial insight perceives nothing of spiritual interest or even meanings of a positively unspiritual nature, Sri Ramakrishna who could probe into the deepest layers of experience could feel and sense the Divinity. The explanation of his seeing the glory of God in particulars lies in his comprehension of the spiritual basis of experience as a whole. This capacity of his to see God in all and in each is not only no sign of mental weakness, as ill-informed critics assume, but the sure indication of his spiritual magnitude. It was that which marked him out among the great men of his day and immortalised his name for ages to come.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER\*

*By A Disciple*

ONE day the Mother was seated on her meditation carpet counting the beads. The evening service was over.....I prostrated before her and sat nearby. The mother asked about our welfare.....A woman devotee, a relative of the Mother, came and said to her, "Please set my mind right. I am full of worries. I do not wish even to live for a day. I shall make a will, and leave all my property to

you. After my death, you execute my will." The Mother laughed and said, "When are you going to die?" Suddenly she became grave, and said, "If that be your intention, then please go home quietly. Don't create trouble in a place like this. You have such a nice place to live in, and my company too (suddenly she restrained herself), I mean the company of the monks and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. If such

\* Sri Sri Sarada Devi, the consort of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, was known among his disciples and followers as the 'Holy Mother.' She was the first of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples and the Guru of many monks and householders. These reminiscences were recorded by a lady disciple of the Holy Mother.

associations do not make you peaceful, I do not know what else will help you. Can you tell me what you want?.....Do you remember your past life, so full of troubles and worries? And now there is no trouble anywhere. You could achieve anything you like, in this life. You cannot understand the value of this place.\* You will know it when you will be away from it. It is a pity that you cannot appreciate it now. Your mind is full of evil ideas, therefore you do not get any peace. Your brain has become heated because you are leading an extremely idle life. You have got nothing to do. Can't you even think of a good thought? O, what an impure mind!" Suddenly she smiled and said, looking at me, "Do you notice, my child, the inscrutable Lila of Sri Ramakrishna? Look at my own relatives! See the evil company I am in. One is already mad, and this one also is verging on insanity. And look at the third one! How much care I took to train her up, but all futile! She does not have the slightest trace of wisdom."

The woman relative of the Mother left the place with a sorrowful air, and she lay down on the bed.

Mother: My child, you have been extremely fortunate to get this human birth. Pray intensely to God. One must work hard. How can one achieve anything without effort? You must make some time for prayer, even in the midst of the busiest hours of the day. How shall I describe to you, my child, my own life? At that time, at Dakshineswar, I used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning and sit for meditation.

I would be totally lost in meditation. Once, in a moonlit night, I was performing my Japam near the steps of the Nahabat. Everything was quiet. I did not know that Sri Ramakrishna passed that way to answer the call of nature. On other occasions, I would hear the sound of his shoes, but on this I was totally absorbed in meditation. At that time I looked differently. I had ornaments and a cloth with a red border. The wind had made the cloth slip from my body. I was unconscious of it. Young Jogin came there to give the water-jug to Sri Ramakrishna, and saw me in that condition. Ah! The ecstasy of those days! On a moonlit night I would look at the moon and pray with folded hands, 'May my heart be as pure as the rays of yonder moon.' If you are steady in meditation and prayer, you will clearly see Sri Ramakrishna in your heart, and hear his voice. The moment an idea flashes in your mind, it will be fulfilled then and there. You will be bathed in peace. Ah! What a mind I had at that time. Brinde (the maid-servant) one day dropped a metal plate in front of me, with a bang. The sound penetrated into my heart. (The Holy Mother was then meditating in the Nahabat and felt the sound like a clap of thunder, and she burst into tears.) In the course of your spiritual realisation you will find that He who resides in my heart exists in your heart as well. He is in the heart of everyone, the oppressed, the persecuted, the untouchable and the outcast. This realisation makes one truly humble. What shall I say about my sister-in-law? One day some sweepers came to our house at Jayrambati and brought a straw-ring for supporting the water-jar on the ground. I asked the man with the ring to leave it outside. With

\*The Holy Mother, out of her spiritual modesty, could hardly speak in the first person; therefore she always referred to herself by speaking in the third person, as 'this place,' or 'these devotees.'

great caution he left it there, but my sister-in-law created a fuss and said, 'The sweeper has touched other things. Throw them away!', and she began to abuse him saying, 'You are all outcasts and you have the nerve to touch our things!' The sweeper was almost dead with fright, but I reassured him and said, 'You need not be afraid of anything.' I also gave them some money to get some refreshments. Such is my sister-in-law's mental state. Let her get up from bed at 3 o'clock in the morning and sit in the porch adjoining my room for meditation. Let me see how she can still have any worry of mind. But she will never do that, and always talks about her troubles. What is her suffering? I never knew, my child, what mental worry was. But now I have been suffering day and night for my relatives. It was an unlucky time when this sister-in-law came to our family; all my sufferings are due to my efforts to bring up her daughter Radhu. Let them all go away! I do not want anybody. Just look at these girls! They never listen to me, such arrogant women.

Mother: Ah, how Sri Ramakrishna treated me! Not even one day did he utter one word to wound my feelings! He never struck me even with a flower. One day, at Dakshineswar, I entered his room with his meal. He thought it was Lakshmi (his niece) and said in a peremptory voice, "Shut the door when you leave the room." "Very well", said I. He was startled to hear my voice, and said, "Who is it? You? I did not know that you came here! I thought it was Lakshmi. Please forgive me."\* I said, "What difference does it

make?" He never addressed me as 'Tui.' He always looked after my welfare. He would tell me, "One should be always active. When you are idle, all sorts of bad thoughts and ideas crop up in your mind." One day he gave me some hemp and asked me to make a net from it so that he could keep the pots of sweets in it, for his young disciples. I made the net accordingly, and with the combed-out fibres that were left over, I stuffed a pillow. I used to lie down on a hard mat and place that pillow under my head. Now you see all these beds and mattresses, but at that time I used to have the same sleep as I have now. I don't see any difference. He used to say, "Dear Hridu (his nephew), I was extremely concerned about her when she first came here. She came from the country and did not know about the ways of city life. I thought people would criticise her movements and we would all be hurt. But she was so wonderful that she was completely hidden from others. I never saw her outside her room." When I heard about his remarks, I also became anxious about myself. I knew that whatever he wanted was always fulfilled. If I had gone out of the room, I must attract his attention. With great eagerness I used to pray to the Mother of the Universe, "O Mother Divine, please be gracious enough to protect my modesty." And my Mother is so gracious that She always protected me with Her two wings, like the mother hen sheltering the young chicks. I lived for many years at Dakshineswar, but not for one day did anyone see me outside my room. People always addressed me as Bhagavati (an epithet of Durga, the Divine Mother of the Universe). Sometimes I also think that perhaps it is so. Otherwise, I cannot explain all those miraculous incidents of my

\*The word 'shut,' in the imperative, is always used with 'Tui' (you), which is addressed only to inferior persons.

life. Golap-Ma and Jogin-Ma know many of these incidents. If I ever think, 'Let such and such a thing happen,' or 'I shall eat such and such a food,' through the grace of God my desires are actually fulfilled. Alas, what wonderful days I experienced at Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna used to sing devotional music, and I would stand for hours behind the screen of my room in the Nahabat. I would salute him with folded hands. What an ecstasy I experienced at that time! People would crowd there day and night, and he would talk about God. There was a boy called Vishnu, who committed suicide for fear of being attached to the world. One of the devotees asked Sri Ramakrishna, 'This boy committed suicide. Is it not sinful?' Sri Ramakrishna said, 'He has given up his body for God. There can be no sin in that.' But don't tell this to others. They will not understand it. But look here, this incident has also been printed in the book.

My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realisation of God. What a wonderful mind I had at that time! Somebody used to play on the flute in the night at Dakshineswar. As I listened to the sound, my mind would be extremely eager for the realisation of God. I thought the sound was coming directly from God, and I would enter into Samadhi. I experienced the same ecstasy at Belur also. The place is very peaceful and I was constantly in a mood of meditation. Therefore Naren (Swami Vivekananda) intended to build there a place for me. The land where this house stands was given by Kedar Das. But now the price of land has soared high, it is impossible to

purchase a place now. All this has been done through the grace of God."

Just at that time, Maku (her niece) entered the room, with her child in her arms, and left the boy there, saying "Mother, what shall I do? He does not sleep at all." The Mother said, "The child has the quality of Sattva, therefore he does not sleep."

The Mother had been suffering terribly from the pain of pimples. She said, "I am wracked, day and night, with this pain from the pimples. They have come out on my face as well. You may feel them with your fingers. Is there no cure for them? Please apply this oil. This medicine is really my life-saver. The moment you apply it, I get relief."

While rubbing that oil, I said to her, "Mother, one day at my home, I finished the worship of Sri Ramakrishna in the chapel, and then engaged myself in my household duties. After a while I returned to the chapel and saw that the picture of Sri Ramakrishna was covered with tiny drops of perspiration. The window was open and the sun came inside the room and touched the picture. But I thought, perhaps these are water-drops which might have struck to the picture at the time of my worship. I wiped the picture, and then again returned to the room after some time, to see if they were real drops of perspiration due to the sun. This time also I saw that the picture was covered with perspiration. Then I shut the windows.

Mother: Yes, child. Phenomena like these are not uncommon. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'The body and its shadow, the jar (used in worship by the Hindus) and the picture are the same; they are all symbols of God.'

The Mother was silent for a while. My servant came there to take me back home. The Mother said, "I shall see you again, my child." I prostrated before her and returned home.

Another day, the Mother was seated in the northern porch of the house. A young man, a devotee, was talking to her. He placed his head on her feet, and said, "Mother, I have suffered a great deal in this world. You are my Guru. You are my Ishtam (chosen Ideal). I do not know anybody else. Truly, Mother,

I have done so many iniquitous things that I am ashamed to relate them to others. But still you are so kind to me. Through your compassion alone I exist to-day."

The Mother, with great affection, placed her hand on his head and gave it gentle strokes. She said, "To the Mother, the child is always a child." The devotee said, "That is true, Mother. I have received your grace in abundance. But that must not make me feel that it is very easy to receive it."

## OUR EXPERIMENTS IN MORAL EDUCATION : ITS IDEAL AND PRACTICE\*

*By Swami Yatiswarananda*

### *Introductory Remarks*

LET me first of all offer you most cordial greetings on behalf of my Motherland India, and on behalf of the Holy Order I have the privilege to represent here,—I mean the Order of Ramakrishna—a monastic body that is carrying on, with the help and co-operation of a large body of lay members and workers, its humanitarian, educational, moral and spiritual service from its hundred and more centres working in India, America, and other countries of the world.

I have come to you in this ancient city—the old capital of Poland—not as a stranger amongst strangers, but as one who believes in the exchange and assimilation of the best in the cultures of the East and the West, and also feels a real kinship with all those whose hearts beat to the same moral and spiritual tunes, whose souls yearn for the rea-

lisation of Truth that is neither Eastern nor Western, but is the goal of all.

As a member of an Order founded on universal principles, on international and inter-religious ideals—and as a humble worker attempting to promote cultural relations and friendly understanding between peoples and peoples, I could not, in spite of the difficulties that lay in my way, help responding to the kind invitation extended to me by the noble general secretary of this congress during my stay in Germany. Let me confess here that when I heard of this congress, I was wondering as to what it really was. But I was much impressed when I noticed the ring of sincerity marking the general secretary's letters to me, and also read the prospectus, stating clearly the aims and objects of the congress.

\*Paper written for the International Moral Educational Congress held at Carcow, Poland, in September 1934.

*The Menace of Immorality—a  
World-Phenomenon*

The whole world is more or less passing through a great chaos and unsettlement, not merely economic, but also moral and spiritual. The higher ideals of life are fast being thrown to the winds in the most reckless manner. The fundamental principles of civilisation are not only being lowered but are also being denied more and more, and this by an ever increasing number of men and women in all lands. And what is worse, the lower conceptions of life that people rarely dared to express openly are being widely proclaimed without any sense of shame or decency. The whole world is being flooded with most objectionable literature and picture-shows advocating the lowest expressions of life, and unfortunately these are becoming now-a-days as popular as they are dangerous. The result is that, besides other forms of evil, sensuality and violence are vying with each other in undermining individual and collective life in all parts of the world. No nation need sling mud on others and try to prove their supposed superiority. There is so much of depravity and vulgarity growing in every society and country that we should be fully alive to the common danger that threatens all forms of healthy and natural growth both to the individual and the nation more or less all over the world.

*Attempts to find out Remedies  
for our ills*

In the midst of the grim realities of life, the only redeeming feature lies in the fact that at least some sincere souls have become anxious about the future of the human race, and are eager to find out ways and means for saving world civilisation from disruption

and ruin. And one having the welfare of mankind at heart heaves a sigh of relief to think that if the forces of evil around us are becoming stronger and stronger, congresses and conferences like the present one are affording opportunities to "discover the moral forces common to every human being," "to show their vivifying and creative strength," "to awaken in humanity the faith in good and unity with a view to prepare the man of the future, the man, who, free from hatred, will know how to work in love and contribute to the common good."

Let me not be misunderstood as being too optimistic. I know fully well that mere deliberations and resolutions will not help us much, unless we try to act up to them, and that no sudden mass-production is possible in the domain of the truly moral and spiritual life. But it is no small gain to consider our common problems all together and have our ideas about the situation clarified and defined through discussions and the comparing of notes. For, then and then alone will it be possible for us to work for our own good as well as for that of our neighbours.

*Our Ideal of Education*

One of the greatest needs of our age, as for all ages, is education of the right type, and whatever may be its nature, there is no doubt that moral education should form one of its essential branches. Our attitude and sentiments, our thoughts and feelings which are the causes of our actions are to be ennobled through education, and it is then alone that the right course of action would be possible. And this ethical training is necessary both for the man of the world and also for him who would like to follow

the spiritual path in a more or less exclusive manner. Now with reference to moral education the question arises : Where to find the teacher and the student of the right sort ?

There is a saying in India that "teachers can be had by the hundreds of thousands, but it is difficult to get a single student." Really, very little success can be attained in the field of education without first educating the educator. So it is necessary that first of all the teacher must be properly trained, the inspirer must be made to possess the necessary inspiration, faith and knowledge to be an efficient guide to others. And he should show the path both by his life and thought, practice and precept. I propose to share with you now some of our ideals—which we are trying to follow with an amount of success in the training of our teachers and students.

The object of the ideal system of education should be not merely advancement of theoretical knowledge but also advancement of life, development of the highest powers and capacities, unfoldment of the noblest potentialities of the student. It is not enough if he is furnished with informations. He must be enabled at the same time to apply intelligently to his own life all the ideas and ideals he has learnt and gathered, and thus promote his growth and evolution, physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually.

In a spirit of righteous indignation does Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India,—the founder of our institution—observe, "We want the abolition of that system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass being

advised that it could be turned into a horse." The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion,—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on his own legs. And again the Swami says, "We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect expanded, and by which one can stand on his own feet." "I never," says the Swami further, "define anything. Still it (education) may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words; as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently."

Many of the greatest thinkers both in the East and the West have expressed similar ideas. It is being recognised more and more that education "should be the foundation of character, the culture of spirit, the building of the soul." Thus among many of the idealistic educationists there exists a wonderful agreement as to the fundamentals, as regards the place of moral culture in the great scheme of education, although there certainly are and will naturally be, differences in stress with reference to the detailed working out of the system.

#### *The Central Theme of Education*

The ordinary means of imparting education is "to drive into the mind" of the student a mass of informations for which he may not possess any real interest. The child is ordinarily considered more or less a receiving machine. But according to the literal meaning of the term education, he is to be



treated in an altogether different way. He is to be regarded as a living entity with innate capacities and potentialities "which are to be drawn out." "Whatever a man knows," observes Swami Vivekananda, "should in strict psychological language be what he discovers or unveils. What a man 'learns' is really what he discovers by taking the cover off his own soul."

We may believe in different theories of knowledge but we all should agree on this point that by means of education we do not create the instruments of sense-perception nor the mental faculties in the child, but we only help him to evolve them out of their rudimentary states. The child is born with certain powers and capacities which are to be brought out and developed through a systematic training and culture. It is not enough if he becomes a passive though self-conscious machine lying at the mercy of the environment. He must be helped to grow into an active and creative being who can intelligently adapt himself to the environments, and rise equal to them, and may even transform and transcend them to some extent. In short, the student is to be treated as an individual whose individuality is to be developed, a person whose personality is to be evolved along right lines through proper instruction and training.

#### *An Ideal of All-round Education*

We need not discuss here the superiority or otherwise of the different theories as to the true nature of the human personality. But it is impossible to formulate any system of education without having a definite conception of the nature and the inner potentialities and future possibilities of the being we

want to educate and train. And before I proceed further, I must tell you what we believe to be the nature and the goal of each soul. We hold that each soul is potentially perfect and divine. The goal is to manifest this perfection and divinity that is hidden under accretions and encrustations that we usually take to be our own individuality. But just now, with reference to the education of the child we are concerned, not with his ultimate nature and goal, we are mainly interested at present in the child as a human being, and in the path he is to follow for the growth and evolution of his true personality. It is enough to our purpose if we regard the students under our care as self-conscious soul entities having bodies and organs of sense-perception, and possessing an "inner organ"—the mind with its faculties of intelligence, feeling and will, untutored and undeveloped, but capable of being trained and evolved into efficient instruments of perception and thought leading to the right code of life and conduct according to the very law of its being.

Thus true education of the child means an all-round culture, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. A complete system of education cannot disregard all these different aspects. It must take into full account the development of a healthy body, a proper control of sense-impulses and instincts, the acquirement of knowledge, sublimation and proper direction of feelings and sentiments, development of the will and the sense of duty, and also soul-culture which removes mental darkness and reveals the glory of the true Self by enabling one to rise above the false personality founded on illusions and nourished by false desires and morbid gratification of the senses.

*The Need to Stimulate the very Soul  
of the Individual*

A complete system of education implies a balance and harmony between the properly developed body, mind and soul. Physical culture is comparatively simple and easy affair, but the culture of the mind which includes moral training is a more difficult affair, as it has got its conscious and subconscious, its instinctive and intelligent processes with reference to the working of its different faculties. The most difficult of all, however, is the culture of the soul which implies the awakening of the intuitive faculty or the soul's apperception of itself and direct vision of the Truth, without the help of the complex and tortuous process of thought. But whatever it be, it will not do for us to evade the problems that stare us in the face. In our attempts to form a correct estimate of the human personality, we have to regard its life as a synthetic whole, and as such we have got to consider in the ideal scheme of education what the Upanishad calls the two-fold knowledge. "There are two kinds of knowledge to be known. They are the higher and the lower. Of these the lower knowledge consists of the study of scriptures and all other branches of learning like the epics, grammar, mathematics, logic, ethics, politics, the science of elementals, astronomy, fine arts and the like. And the higher is that by which the Imperishable Truth is known."

With the vision of a seer that he was, Swami Vivekananda included in his scheme of education both Western science and Hindu Vedanta, all forms of healthy and up-to-date secular learning and also moral and spiritual culture. Really the first task of the educator is to help the child to grow into a strong

personality, in his physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects, in short, to stimulate and strengthen his entire life and soul.

Speaking of his ideal of character-building education, the Swami observes : "What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in every fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face....."

"Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to believe, "I am the Soul. Me the sword cannot cut; nor weapons pierce; me the fire cannot burn; me the air cannot dry."

*The greatest Incentive to Moral Life*

I may be accused of entering into the domain of religion and philosophy. But let me assure you that I do so because we have found in our own experiments in moral education that a strong faith in the Self that its ultimate nature is purity, goodness and immortality, acts as a great incentive in moral life—in overcoming immorality and weakness, and in asserting the innate holiness and strength that is the birthright of every one who would like to claim and assert it as his own.

And as we are growing in experience, we are recognising more and more the meaning of what Swami Vivekananda says,—“Let every man and woman and child without respect of birth or caste, weakness or strength, hear and learn that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one,

there is that Infinite Soul, assuring the infinite possibility and infinite capacity of all to become great and good."

"Teach yourself, teach every one his real nature. Call upon the sleeping soul to see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity."

By constantly thinking that we are evil and perverse by nature, we have actually become so. By intensively cherishing opposite currents of thoughts, by thinking of God, by meditating on the Divine and the Holy within ourselves and along with this following the right code of

conduct, we purify our ego, free the mind of its evil propensities, and finally come to build up our moral life on securest foundations. We become naturally moral and pure to the extent we realise this truth in ourselves.

I place before you an experiment that we are making with striking success, and I request those of you who feel so inclined to verify our conclusions by, of course, following the right-ways and means. This is not a method or system of auto-suggestions based on airy nothings. It is on the other hand a method of meditation founded on Reality and leading to the Reality that is the Soul of our soul, the Being of our being.

*(To be Concluded)*

## MAHAVIR—AN IDEAL DEVOTEE

*By Swami Jagadiswarananda*

MAHAVIR is one of the loftiest characters delineated in our great epics. In depth of devotion, purity of purpose, fervency of faith and steadfastness of service, he stands almost unsurpassed as an ideal devotee. He is a rare combination of valour and Bhakti (devotion), Seva (service) and Shraddha (faith). His life is founded on the bed-rock of celibacy and continence, Shakti and Brahmacharya.

Swami Vivekananda was of opinion that the Hindu youth of to-day should emulate the noble life of Mahavir, the great hero. He placed before the young men of our country the ideal examples of Mahavir and Nachiketa for the building up of their life and character. His words are as follows: "You have now to make the cha-

racter of Mahavir your ideal. See how at the command of Ramachandra he crossed the ocean. He had no care for life or death. He was a perfect master of his senses and wonderfully sagacious. You have now to build your life on the great ideal of personal service. Through that all other ideals will manifest in life. Obedience to the Guru without questioning and strict observance of Brahmacharya—this is the secret of success. As on the one hand Mahavir represents the ideal of service, so, on the other he represents lionine courage striking the whole world with awe. He has not the least hesitation in sacrificing his life for the good of Rama. A supreme indifference in everything except the service of Rama; quite indifferent even to the attainment of

the status of Brahma or Siva, the great world-Gods. Only the carrying out of Rama's behest is the one vow of his life." Sri Ramachandra was the lord of his life and the idol of his heart. Whole-hearted devotion and faithful service to Him as well as unwavering faith in Him were the dominant notes of his heroic character. In youth he studied the scriptures with uncommon zeal and wrote a drama portraying the divine life of Rama. As a boy he showed signs of extraordinary strength and prowess resulting in excessive audacity and restlessness. 'This was due to infinite faith in himself. The boyhood of all great men is marked with such restlessness. The boy Vivekananda was so restless and self-confident that he was wrongly mistaken to be a proud and egoistic person by his companions. From the lap of his mother, Mahavir wanted to catch at one leap the red rising sun in the morning sky and play with it. He was the unfailing friend and adviser of Sugriva, and saved him from many dangers by giving personal help and sound counsels. When Sugriva was driven to the forest by his brother, Vali, he did not desert him like ordinary friends but shared his sorrows. He was a friend in need and was not motivated by any selfish interest. How rare indeed is such a selfless friend in this world!

Mahavir came in contact with Rama while the latter was in exile in the forest and was wandering helpless with Lakshmana in search of Sita. He took up the arduous task of finding out Sita in Lanka (sometimes identified with modern Ceylon) where she was carried away by Ravan. His meeting with Rama changed the course of his life. He became so devoted to Him that he dedicated his whole life to his ser-

vice. He forgot his hearth and home, family and friends, took the vow of Brahmacharya and gave up the idea of leading a wordly life. He played a very important part in the recovery of Sita and plunged himself heart and soul in performing the task allotted to him by his master. He knew no rest till Sita was rescued. No other thought found a place in his mind except the service of Rama. His whole soul was so much absorbed in His contemplation that he never cared to remember even the dates of month. When asked for the reason for this, he used to say, "Rama is my eternal date." His life was an unbroken current of consecration and contemplation. How faith can move mountains and make the impossible possible to a true devotee is beautifully illustrated in the life of Mahavir. He had unflinching, immovable and absolute faith in God and so wrought miracles at every step of his life. Faith means passivity and idleness to most of us but to Mahavir it signified continuous self-surrender to God and total effacement of all individual will. Full faith made him an instrument in the hands of God and so his life shed the lustre of divine light. While in the course of the long search for Sita he was required to leap over the sea separating India from Lanka (Ceylon), he meditated thus :

प्रागप्रयागनामये यस्य नाम सकृत् स्मरन् ।

नरस्तीर्त्वा भवाम्भोधिमपारं याति तत्पदम् ॥

किं पुनस्तस्य द्रुतोऽहं तदङ्गाङ्गुलि-मुद्रिकः ।

तमेव हृदये ध्यात्वा लङ्घयाम्यल्प वाग्विभम् ॥

"I am the messenger of Him by repeating whose name once only, man crosses the shoreless ocean of the world. The ring with a mark of His finger adorns my head. By meditating on Him only I will jump over this small sea."

Mahavir did actually what he thought. By whose grace the dumb become poets and the lame ascend mountains, with His grace he crossed the ocean by a jump and reached Lanka in disguise. Supernormal power came to his limbs by the repetition of God's Name in which really God's infinite power resides. All saints have testified and experienced that God and His name are equally potent. After a prolonged search he found out Sita in Asokavana under the Semsapa tree with dishavelled hairs and worn out clothes. Lest Sita should suspect him as an attendant of Ravan he began singing the praises of Rama which gave life to Sita who was then more dead than alive by the pang of Rama's separation. Sita believed him to be a *bona fide* messenger of Rama when the finger-ring of the latter was produced by Mahavir. Sita was overjoyed at the news of Rama. When his arrival in Lanka was rumoured he was arrested and taken as a captive to Ravan by Indrajit. Mahavir was as bold and fearless as ever in the presence of Ravan even at the risk of his life. Truly the poet has said : "The valiant never taste of death but once." Fear was unknown to him by the power of Shraddha and Viswas (faith). When Ravan scolded and criticised Ramachandra, Mahavir could not bear it. He burst into righteous indignation and thundered fearlessly, "I do not care a straw for a crore of Ravans like you as I am the son and servant of Rama." Ravan flared up and ordered that Mahavir must be killed and cut to pieces. This however did not daunt him at all. With due moral courage he admonished him and gave ethical instructions advising him to give up all enmity to Rama, surrender to Him and send back Sita honorably to Ayodhya. Nothing however was of any avail.

Vibhisan pointed out the principle of political ethics to his brother Ravan and pleaded for the life of the messenger of Rama. So Ravan modified the punishment and commanded that his tail must be tied with rags soaked in oil and be burnt. Material fire could not burn his tail as he was meditating all the while during the ordeal thus :

यन्नाम-संस्मरणधृत-रामस्तपापा-स्तापस्त्रयानलम-  
पीह तरन्ति सद्यः ।

तस्यैव किं रघुवरस्य विशिष्टदूतः सन्तपाने  
कथमनौ प्रकृतानलेन ॥

"I am the messenger of Him whose remembrance removes three-fold Tapas and all Papas of man. I am meditating on Him. How can mortal fire burn me."

The fire however could not do any harm to him as he was putting on the armour of faith and devotion. When Mahavir was about to return to India with all available news of Sita, he humbly prayed to her that if she had no objection it would be a privilege to him to carry her to Rama on his shoulders. But Sita refused to escape in that way. Rama was very happy to get Sita's news from Mahavir and embraced him on his arrival. When Rama and Lakshman were caught in the Nagapasa by his foes, Garuda, the king of snakes, was sent for, and he set them free sundering the serpentine snares. Garuda was a great devotee of Rama and prayed to Him to show him his Isthā-murti, the form of Vishnu. Rama had to give way to the prayers of his Bhakta and changed Himself into the form of Vishnu. Mahavir's faith was not a bit shaken by this. Though he had singleness of devotion or Ishta-nishta, he had not like many of us that hideous fanaticism which breeds not only indifference to but

even positive hatred of other forms or aspects of God. He said :

श्रीनाथे जानकीनाथे अभेदः परमात्मनि ।

तथापि मम सर्वस्वः रामः कमललोचनः ॥

“ Though Srinath or Vishnu and Janakinath or Rama are inseparable and one, yet the lotus-eyed Rama is my all in all.” Ishtanishta in its essence does not mean any one-sidedness. The Ishtanishta we practise is a mere caricature of its true form and is a great impediment to the growth of proper devotion. Rightly, one great soul has said that as a real wife is fully devoted to her husband while at the same time she equally respects the brothers of her husband without cherishing any ill-feeling, so man must not only adore his chosen ideal whole-heartedly but he should respect other forms of the Divinity also thinking them to be different forms of his own Ishta-deva.

Nor was Mahavir a bigot of a particular sect of his religion. He was the personification of the true spirit of Hindu catholicism and universality. He believed that various forms of worship or spiritual disciplines advocated by different religions are but various roads to the self-same Goal. The aspirant realises this great truth with the gradual evolution of his spiritual life. We must not lose sight of the important fact that the nature of our spiritual experiences are very greatly determined by the conceptions of God we have. Unless we keep a clear-cut idea of the ultimate Truth ever fresh before our mind's eye, our spiritual illumination will never be final. Once Rama asked Mahavir what he thought of Him. Without hesitation Mahavir said :

देहबुद्ध्या दासोऽस्मि ते जीवबुद्ध्या त्वदंशकः ।

आत्मबुद्ध्या त्वमेवाहं इति मे निश्चितामतिः ॥

“ When I think I am the body, I am your servant. When I think I am the Jiva, I am a part and parcel of which you are the whole. But when I think I am the Atman—I and you are one.”

This in short is perhaps the essence of Hindu Religion and Philosophy. Mahavir was endowed with all the qualities which an ideal devotee must possess. He was the master of his mind. He was never a slave to it as the majority of us are. Those who lead a spiritual life know how hard it is to control it. Even Arjuna found it next to impossible to subdue it and observed that it was as uncontrollable as the wind. A saint has compared the ever-moving mind with the monkey whose natural restlessness is thousand-fold increased first by drinking wine and then by scorpion bite. But through the grace of God, Mahavir tamed his mind so much that it never hindered but always helped his spiritual endeavours. When he had gone to Lanka to find out the whereabouts of Sita, he witnessed license, luxury and sensuality there on all sides. In that realm where lust and its retinue reigned supreme, he never lost balance of mind and went on calmly doing the work which he was deputed to do. He observed thus:

मनोहि हेतुः सर्वेषामिन्द्रियाणां प्रवर्तने ।

शुभाशुभास्त्ववस्थासु तच्च मे सुव्यवस्थितम् ॥

“ It is the mind which persuades the senses to run after enjoyments. But through Rama's grace my mind is still, either in weal or woe.” Verily he whose mind is under control is the object of our adoration.”

After conquering and killing Ravan and rescuing Sita, Rama returned to Ayodhya, and was crowned King of Ayodhya. As a recognition of the unremitting service rendered to him by his friends and followers, he gave them many valuable presents.

But in the hurry Mahavir alone was omitted by chance. Mahavir however humbly approached Rama and kneeling before Him prayed why he was not called for His blessings. Sita saw this, and with the permission of Rama took her pet necklace and presented it to Mahavir who prostrated at her feet and accepted the offer. He put it on his neck for sometime and then took it off and began biting and breaking the beads. *i. e.*, the jewels. This astonished the royal assembly very much. He was asked to explain his conduct. He said, "In body, mind and soul, I belong to Rama. Hence I cannot accept anything which does not contain the name of Rama. I am biting the jewels to see whether there is Rama-nama (Rama's name) inside them, and as they do not contain it, I am rejecting them." Enraged at this Lakshman put him the question whether his body which was so dear to him bore the marks of Rama-nama within. Mahavir tore open his breast and showed that every drop of blood, every bit of bone, every fragment of flesh in his body was saturated with Ramanama. It is said that this is the case with all great devotees. When the body of the great Sufi saint Monsoor was sliced, every part of it uttered the absolute spiritual Truth, 'Anal Haq' *i. e.*, I am He. This shows that eventually a real devotee loses his identity in the Lord and sees Him alone everywhere, both inside and outside. Some holy man has rightly said that the heart of the devotee is the parlour of God where He mostly lives.

The crowning point of Mahavir's devotion, was reached towards the end of his life. When Rama was reinstalled on the throne and there was peace in Ayodhya, he made up his mind to retire to the holy Himalayas for exclusive meditation

and penance. Before departure he went to Rama and asked for his final blessing. Rama graciously promised that he was ready to grant any boon that he might ask for. Mahavir said :

त्वन्नाम स्मरतो गम न तृप्यति मनो मम ।

अतस्त्वन्नाम सततं स्मरन् स्यास्यामि भूतले ॥

यावत्स्यास्यति ते नाम लोके तावत् कलेवरम् ।

यावत्तत्र कथा लोके विचरिष्यति पावनी ।

तावत्स्यास्यामि मेदिन्यां तवाज्ञामनुपालयन् ॥

"My mind is never satisfied by the repetition of your holy and sweet name. The more I take them the more my thirst increases. Bless me, O Lord, that my body may last as long as your name lives so that I may repeat your name for all eternity." "As long as man thinks of and talks of your holy life I may be spared to remain and hear them and be blessed."

It is perhaps impossible to think of a greater ideal of devotion than that of Mahavir. It is said :

यत्र यत् रघुनाथ कीर्तनं तत्र तत् कृतमस्त-  
काञ्चलिम् ।

वाष्पवारिपिपूर्णलोचनं मारुतिं नमत राक्षसा-  
न्तकम् ॥

"Wherever the name of Rama is uttered there sits Mahavir with tearful eyes and prayerful mind listening to the Kirtanam, heart and soul. Salutations to this son of Marut, the killer of demon."

Mahavir is one of those seven Chiranjeevis or immortals who got the gift of immortality by the intensity of devotion and faith. Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Mission, had seen, we are told, in a Ramnama Kirtan at Benares, Mahavir in the disguise of an old Brahmin. He afterwards introduced the Ramnam Kirtan on Ekadashi days in the centres of Ramakrishna Mission all over India.

## THE FOUR GREAT SAYINGS

By Dr. S. Banerjee

**T**HE four Great Sayings (महा-वाक्यानि) from the Upanishads under the four Vedas, *viz.*, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म, अयमात्मा ब्रह्म, तत्त्वमसि are well known. But I think it would profit us to reflect how in a nutshell they contain the very cream of the Vedanta.

Let us first take—although it would be a departure from the traditional setting by Vidyananya in his Panchadasi in which he has arranged the sayings according to the Rig, Yaju, Sama and Atharva Vedas,—the saying, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि—a word that at once strikes awe and terror into the hearts of our dualistic friends. “What”, they say, “you, a pigmy, a tiny boat at the mercy of the waves of the ocean of the world (संसार), are the Brahman, the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of the Universe?” It is quite obvious here that the ‘Brahman’ used by the critic is confounded with the personal God with which we are mostly familiar, and anthropomorphism dies hard in human minds. The critic uses the word of the Vedanta (ब्रह्मन्) but attaches to it his own meaning. All controversy would be set at rest if it is explained to him what is meant by ‘Brahman’ to the Vedantin. The answer is furnished in the Great saying, प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म or Brahman is Consciousness. When the Vedantin says अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, he does not mean that his particular physical frame with its muscles and bones and nerves is his real self; not even his mind is his real self, for that is also nourished by food as the Scripture says,<sup>1</sup> and it is ob-

served that there are states, such as deep sleep, in which one lives even though the wide-awake mind ceases entirely to function,—but it is his Consciousness, the ubiquity of which in all states is beyond question and affirmed by the Scriptures,<sup>2</sup> that is his real self.<sup>3</sup>

“Brahman is Consciousness” may seem to be vague generalising. To counteract this, as it were, and to be more precise, particular and definite, we have the Great Saying, अयमात्मा ब्रह्म or the soul is Brahman. We may recall that this word comes in immediately after the words सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्म of the Mandukya Upanishad, and Sankara, in his commentary, has explained that it is placed definitely in order to relieve the generalising tone of the previous words<sup>4</sup>. By identifying it with the Atman the concept of the Brahman is placed on a tangible matter-of-fact plane, which not only absolves the system of the Vedanta from any charge, however remote, of agnosticism, but by identifying the Atman again with our consciousness, our psychical being, “something that is in essence akin to that which we know immediately in our own breasts,<sup>5</sup>”—lends it a most practical significance.

1 अन्नमयं हि सोम्य मनः Chandogya 6-7-6.

2 Kathopanishad 5-8, Brihadaranyaka 6-7-6.

3 The Chapter, “Brahman as consciousness” in Deussen’s “Philosophy of the Upanishads” is very illuminating in this respect.

4 तच्च ब्रह्म परोक्षाभिहितं प्रत्यक्षतो विशेषणं निर्दिशति—अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म इति ।

5 “Philosophy of Religion” by Harold Höffding, P. 71.



Lastly, in तत्त्वमसि lies hidden not only the germ of the whole of Kantian philosophy, but the basis of all ethics, not only of the Vedanta, but of whatever "good morality" that has been preached so far, as has been incontestably proved by Schopenhauer in his "Basis of Morality." For by serving a living link between consciousness and consciousness and identifying them

with each other, everything else which *appears* is relegated to the phenomenal world,—a knowledge the consummation of which is the highest flight that man can take in life. Thus the Four Great Sayings are not isolated words, but are intimately linked with one another in which is contained in a nutshell the whole of the philosophy of the Vedanta.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

*By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau*

(It is shown now that the Mind is free from causality, unborn and one with Brahman. Perception of duality and predications of philosophical systems contradicting each other only serve to conceal the Reality. The philosophy of non-duality alone is free from faults.)

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

In the absence of causes, superior, inferior or middling, the mind is not born. In the absence of a cause, how can a result arise? (76)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Meritorious actions performed according to the rules ordained by one's caste (jati) and station in life (asrama) and free from desires, are superior causes leading one to be born as gods &c. Middling causes are mixtures of actions of merit and demerit and give rise to incarnations as men. Actions of demerit are the inferior causes, enabling one to be born as lower animals or remain as inanimate objects in the world. When the one and non-dual Consciousness of Atman, free from all fabrications (of avidya), does not see and does not relate itself to the superior, middle and inferior causes (or actions) which are fabrications of Avidya just

as a man of discrimination does not see any dirt in the sky which a boy imagines therein, then the mind does not take on the forms of gods (men, lower animals, plants &c.) which are respectively the results of the superior, middling and inferior causes. When the cause is absent, no result can arise, just as no sprout can come up in the absence of the seed.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

To the mind free from causality, being unborn and being always one (non-dual) are alike. Everything being unborn, the mind remains unmanifested. (77)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

We have said that the mind remains unborn in the absence of a cause. Once more, we explain how the unborn mind remains. When the truth is realised, the causes of birth in the form of merit and demerit become of no account and

the mind is not born and is then called Release (Moksha). In the absence of objects, the mind remains One always and in all the three states (waking, dream and sleep). Even before the dawn of knowledge (that is, in the state of avidya) the mind always remains One, being without birth. Before the truth is realised, the mind may appear to be born and dual. But the same always remains unborn mind, remains without birth (that is, there is no duality) and non-dual. Therefore it never either exists nor ceases to be. It always remains of one form (that is, remains unchanged).

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

One who knows the truth of the non-existence of causality and that there is no separate objective cause, reaches that highest state in which there is no sorrow, desire or fear. (78)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

One who, in the aforesaid manner, knows the state of Reality which is devoid of all cause of birth and which being non-dual, can have no cause, who also knows the absence of external causes of the nature of merit and demerit, giving rise to incarnations as gods &c., and who is free from all desire for external good, attains to that fearless state in which there is neither desire nor sorrow and in which there is not a trace of ignorance (avidya). That is to say, he is not born again.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Attachment to the unreal enables the mind to move in a similar (region), that is, unreality. When one comes to know the non-existence of external objects, the mind feels unattached (to objects) and turns away from them. (79)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

Attachment to the unreal means belief in duality which has no real existence. Being sunk in the delusion of Avidya, the mind feels drawn to activity in a state which is like it. When one comes to know the unreality inseparable from duality, then the mind becomes unattached, has no desires and is drawn away from all unreal objects.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

By turning away from duality and not fabricating duality, (the mind) remains in a steady condition. This however is a matter concerning the wise. The mind is in a state of equilibrium, unborn and non-dual. (80)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

When the mind does not busy itself with duality or is not fabricating duality, the mind is in a stable condition of the same nature as Brahman. The mind is of the same nature as Brahman, being non-dual and of the essence of Consciousness. This can be realised only by the wise. Therefore the mind is in equilibrium, unborn and non-dual.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

It is unborn, has no organs of sense, is dreamless and self-luminous. By its very nature, it is ever illuminating. (81)

#### *Sankara's Commentary*

How this is grasped only by the wise, is again explained. It is self-luminous, not requiring the aid of the sun to illuminate it. Its very nature is to shine. It is always shedding light. This character is its very nature.

#### *Gaudapada's Karika*

By limiting perception to one object, Bliss becomes covered up and

misery becomes manifested. The Lord is (the non-dual Atman). (82)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Though this is explained in various ways, why worldly people do not understand it, is now described. By limiting perception to single objects, its various qualities are grasped and by belief in the reality of unreal objects, the Bliss characteristic of the One is easily concealed. The knowledge of duality is itself enough to cloud the Bliss without requiring any other means to bring it about. A knowledge of Reality is difficult to obtain and misery manifests itself. The Lord is the non-dual Deity Atman. Though scriptures and Vedantic teachers proclaim this in various ways, it is not possible (for ordinary people) to understand it. The Sruti says "He who speaks of it, is looked upon with wonder and he who has obtained it is regarded as clever."

*Gaudapada's Karika*

People with no discrimination (that is, having undeveloped minds like children) conceal It (Brahman) by regarding It as existence, or non-existence or a combination of both or total non-existence, by predicating of It respectively change, no change, a combination of both and total negation. (83)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Existence, non-existence and the like, are fine points of comprehension to the learned, but conceal the Lord Paramatman from them. While this is so, what can be said of persons of a low grade of intellect? The following is said to explain this. Some disputants (Vaiśeṣikas) predicate existence to Atman. Others (Vaiśeṣika Bouddhas) predicate

non-existence to Atman. Others (such as, Pseudo-Vaiśeṣikas) and Digambaras (Jains) predicate existence and non-existence together, to Atman. The Nihilists (Madhyamika Bouddhas) totally deny existence to Atman. Of these, those that predicate existence to Atman, do so, as he is subject to change, to distinguish it from a jar and other objects that have only a transitory existence. Those that predicate non-existence do so, from Atman being immutable, not conditioned by objects. Those that attribute existence and non-existence together, do so, as they think it is subject to change and also immutable. To Nihilists, (Atman) is total non-entity. All these four schools of disputants, trying to find Brahman by predicating to It, change, no change, a combination of both and total negation, merely create a veil between themselves and Brahman and are therefore like children with no discrimination. The meaning is that while the learned cannot learn the truth regarding Brahman, what can be said of persons of a low grade of intellect?

*Gaudapada's Karika*

He is always concealed by the doctrines of those who try to understand Him by the four theories described (above). He who knows the Lord as untouched by these theories, is the all-seer. (84)

*Sankara's Commentary*

The essence of Reality, by the knowledge of which, those wanting in discrimination are rendered learned, is now described. The Lord is always kept concealed by the conclusions of those who try to understand Brahman by means of the four theories such as, of existence, of non-existence &c. But the Lord is untouched by the predicates of the four theories such as, of exis-

tence, of non-existence &c. That is to say, He is devoid of all fabrications such as existence &c. That sage, by whom the Purusha described in the Vedantic portions of the Upanishads, is realised, is the all-seer, is omniscient and is the truly learned man.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Having obtained entire omniscience and that condition of Brahman which is non-dual, without a beginning, middle or end, what is there to be desired ? (85)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

"Having obtained the entire omniscience and that condition of Brahman," as described in the texts "He who is Brahman" and "This is the permanent glory of Brahman" &c. "Without beginning, middle and end" means that "he who does not know what creation, sustenance and dissolution are." Having obtained that position of Brahman, what is there beyond that realisation of his own Atman, to be striven for ? It means that it is useless to do so. The Smriti says, "There is no purpose served by his doing any acts."

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

This is humility of Vipras (Brahmanas) and is also known as natural serenity. Self-restraint is due to the natural restraint of the senses. The learned man rests in serenity. (86)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Humility of the Brahmanas is natural as it is the resting condition of Atman. This humility is also Sama (serenity), being natural and not fabricated. Self-restraint is due to the natural restraint of the senses and that is the calm and peaceful state of Brahman. The knower of Brahman who as stated above, attains to natural peace, rests in the serene and calm state characteristic of the nature of Brahman.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Ordinary (or gross) worldly experience consists of a knowledge of (external) objects. Subtle worldly experience consists of perception not of external objects, (but objects of dream world). (87)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The schools of Philosophy which conceal (Brahman) are mutually contradictory and give room for the origin of such faults as desire and enmity &c., which are the causes of the Samsara world. Having shown from their own reasonings that their theories are false, we conclude that the well-reasoned philosophy of non-duality characterised by natural peace and calmness, is devoid of the faults of the four theories and give no room for production of errors like desires &c. Here we begin a description of this self-contained philosophy. Duality characterised by percept and perception, offers room for all sciences and worldly experience and is known as the experience of the wakeful.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Psychological Causes of War

"All the causes of war are psychological at bottom," said Mr. Aldous Huxley in a recent broadcast speech.

"Psycho-Analysts profess to have explored the unconscious to a greater depth than has been reached by other investigators. Perhaps it is for this reason that they are so pessimistic about the immediate prospects of abolishing war."

That is a very unwelcome and depressing conclusion.

But the psycho-analyst is not going to let us satisfy ourselves with this righteous self-consciousness. Says Mr. Huxley, "We say, and with our conscious minds we firmly believe that war is a catastrophe; but our sub-conscious selves, it is evident, do not agree with our conscious selves."

According to Mr. Huxley the psychological factors which contribute towards war mania are as follows (1) "War strengthens all the ties that bind the individual to the group and heightens his sense of group solidarity to the pitch of intoxication." (2) "Most of the tasks in our modern world seems dull and pointless; war comes along and dignifies the dreariest routine with the name of patriotic work." (3) "War moreover produces a certain simplification in the social structure and there seems to be no doubt that men are on the whole happier in a simple than in a complicated society." (4) "People like excitement and are grateful for any excuse to express their feelings—particularly those feelings which education has taught their conscious minds to disapprove of. War justifies hatred, hollows violence, sanctifies delight in destruction—baptises with the sacred name of patriotism all the anti-social tendencies we have been so carefully trained to repress." Mr. Huxley has drawn our attention to the fact that "for every hundred people who kill themselves in peace-time, only about seventy kill themselves in war time." "It is interesting in this connection to

note that the suicide rate fell off during the Franco-Prussian war than during the Great War. One reason for this may be that more people could read in 1914 than in 1870. Where education is universal and compulsory more people are able to get excitement second-hand than in societies where education is reserved for a few. Literacy and cheap printing would account, at least in part, for the fact that the Great War caused the suicide rate to decline even in neutral countries. We see then that, for non-combatants and so long as material conditions remain tolerably good, war actually makes life seem more worth living." (5) "Like war itself nationalism, justifies the individual in giving expression to those anti-social impulses and emotions which he has always been taught to repress. The patriot is allowed to indulge with a good conscience in vanity and hatred—vanity in regard to his own group, hatred in regard to all other groups... Hatred and vanity pay a higher dividend in psychological satisfaction than do impersonal benevolence and reasonableness." That, in short, is the analysis of the war mentality.

Mr. Huxley has not exonerated the Governments from their responsibility for the wars, for "so far from discouraging nationalistic hatred and vanity, all governments directly or indirectly foment them."

Present day dictators who rule over the destinies of modern nations may probably prove themselves the cause of the much-talked-of next war. For says Mr. Huxley, "Eminent psychologists have often pointed out the danger we run in entrusting our destinies to men who may be suffering from mild or acute forms of neurosis, and who are psychologically, so ignorant that they are quite unaware of the nature of their own motives."

### What is the Remedy?

One method suggested by Mr. Huxley is to satisfy the group feeling—"One

of the pleasures of belonging to a group is precisely the pleasure of despising other groups"—by enlarging the group to include the warring nations and find out others as targets for hatred! "We should be grateful enough for the Union of all Europeans—even if, as seems probable, that union were achieved only as the result of increased dislike and fear of Asiatics." But, then, "It is quite possible that for lack of a common enemy, the union of humanity will never be achieved!"

Another remedy Mr. Huxley has suggested is "to sublimate the impulses which at present find satisfaction in nationalism and war. Sport and other competitive activities can doubtless be made to fill at least a part of the gap. Much too could be done by making civilised life less monotonous. It is boredom that makes the emotional orgies of group feeling, vanity and hatred seem so delightful. Abolish boredom, and you abolish one of the main psychological reasons for nationalism, and so, indirectly, for war."

Mr. Huxley is not very hopeful of any good that religious and ethical campaign may do against war. For "History, it seems to me, affords no grounds for believing that it could effect the desired cure unaided. Religious and ethical preaching appeals only to the conscious mind. But man is not entirely or even mainly a conscious being."

And so the psycho-analyst is pessimistic about the immediate prospects of abolishing war.

### Provocation

"ST. THOMAS PRAYS FOR THE CONVERSION OF INDIA." That was the placard exhibited by a Christian church on the last Christmas day, perhaps as part of the campaign, "the conversion of India crusade."

The Hindu has not sought to convert others to his community. He seeks only in the words of Swami Vivekananda, "to make a Christian

a true Christian, a Moslem a true Moslem and a Hindu a true Hindu." He does not seek to destroy the faith of others but only to help them on along their own path to the one Goal towards which all religions lead. But we are pained to see that the Christian is bent upon provoking others into retorts and thereby creating unpleasant situations. Thus we heard a Hindu telling a Christian :

"Krishna is the only saviour of the world, the full manifestation of God on earth. Beware of false prophets. Do you think that the prophet who could not save himself but was crucified could save others? He prayed again and again to Yehovah to save him from the calamity but his god was as powerless as himself but allowed him to be nailed on the cross. No, he can't save you, nor his god. If he had prayed to Krishna he would have been saved, but the sinner that he was, it did not occur to him to take refuge in Him, but only in Yehovah who failed him at the last moment. So he cried out with his last breath "O God, O God, hast thou forsaken me?" but his god did not care a fig for him. Bhagavan Krishna says, 'Whoever will take refuge in Me, I shall save him.' Therefore give up all false prophets and pray to Krishna and He alone can save you."

We are very sorry for such an outburst from a Hindu who ought to have known better. But that shows how the wind blows. It is bigotry that provokes bigotry and fanaticism that breeds fanaticism. We trust sane Hindus as well as sane Christians will keep aloof from such bigotries of their co-religionists. Or else, we will before long, have the unpleasant sight of more lunatic asylums in the country than churches and temples.

### Dean Inge on Mysticism

In an interesting article on 'Religion in England' contributed to the

"Atlantic Monthly," Dean Inge speaks of Mysticism as one of the most powerful movements influencing religious thought in contemporary England. His own religious conviction is a form of Christianity strongly influenced by Platonism which is essentially mystic in its leanings. Mysticism seems to take the place of dogmatism in many quarters now-a-days.

Describing his conception of Mysticism he says: "Mysticism means the practice of the presence of God; its typical activity is prayer, 'the classical definition of which is the elevation of the mind to God.' Mysticism assumes that this communion between the human soul and God is not only possible, but is a fact of experience. Philosophically, Mysticism rests on a psychology of the Platonic type. Man consists of body, soul and spirit. The spirit belongs essentially to the eternal spiritual world, and in proportion as 'soul becomes spirit' we 'have our conversation in heaven,' even during our earthly probation. It is a law of life that we can only know what is like ourselves. Spiritual things, as Saint Paul says, are spiritually discerned. The Greek thinkers taught that salvation consists in 'becoming like God,' or (which for them was the same thing) in 'becoming immortal as far as possible.' The way to this liberation of our personality from its lower attachments is by a life of duty and self-discipline, and by concentration of our thoughts and reflection on divine and spiritual things. The so-called mystical phenomena—trance, ecstasy, abnormal visions and auditions—are not a necessary part of mysticism, and no doubt are often the result of nervous overstrain."

In India we are not in any way surprised to hear this admission of faith by a leading ecclesiastical

figure of England. In this country we have always recognised that religion cannot ultimately stand on dogmatism or even pure logic. If a religious doctrine should be of any serious consequence to life, it must be experienced in a way that carries greater conviction than even our sensuous experiences. Hence Indian sages have always upheld Anubhava as the highest test of Truth. It is the recognition of the possibility of realising the highest truth even in this life that has given rise to the doctrine of Jivan Mukti or liberation even while living. Union with God also implies that there is an underlying unity between God and the deepest nature of man. The extract from Dean Inge shows that he admits both these positions. The way for this union according to him is also not unlike the spiritual disciplines prescribed by Indian sages—performance of Swadharma, practice of self-control, devout reflection and meditation.

### A Test of Mystic Experience

After referring to the attempts of modern psychologists to discredit the experiences of the mystics by classifying them with pathological manifestations, Dean Inge continues: "I have long thought that the evidential value of what it is the fashion to call religious experience is far greater than is usually recognised. In a sense, no doubt, the mystical vision is not transferable, it is even indescribable. But when we find a large number of persons, separated in time, place and even in religion, agreeing closely in what has been shown to them in their quest of the pearl of great price, it seems only reasonable to believe that they are speaking the truth, and that a whole-hearted devotion to a saintly life is in fact rewarded by the gift of 'seeing the

invisible,' as the Epistle to the Hebrews says. Now that the arguments from miracle and prophecy have quite lost their cogency, we cannot afford to neglect the confirmation which the mystics offer us, not, to be sure, of alleged events in the past and future, but of what the religious mind really desires, an assurance that there is a spiritual world, and that it is possible for man 'in heart and mind thither to ascend.'"

One thing is evident from this extract. Christianity has hitherto been claiming a monopoly of Truth and has been seeing the hand of the devil in the teachings of other religions and their saints and seers. As long as Christianity was based on mere dogma, it was easy to convince its followers of this teaching. But now when emphasis has to be shifted from dogma to experience, Christianity is feeling increasingly the necessity of abandoning its exclusive position; for any claim to exclusiveness in the realm of experience would render the experience in question abnormal and thereby detract from its spiritual value. Dean Inge recognises this position quite well, and displays a readiness to accept the experiences of all saints of all creeds as true. That shows whither the wind is blowing in the world of religion—it is in the direction of the universalism of Vedanta.

### **The Condition of Survival**

Regarding Christianity's chances of survival in the West, Dean Inge says: "The church must come to terms with science. This will involve great changes; but if Christianity is essentially a way of living, based on the standard values which Christ came to reveal, I believe that it will survive by its intrinsic truth

and correspondence with the deepest needs and aspirations of human nature."

Dean Inge of course speaks here only of Christianity and its chances of survival. What he has in mind is not, however, the narrow type of dogmatic Christianity that churches and their missionaries familiarise us with. This is clear from the fact that in the passage quoted before he invokes the experiences of sages of all ages and climes in support of his belief in mysticism, in which he finds the best ally of Christianity. Hence his remarks are pertinent regarding the future of religion as a whole. There is a good deal of talk to-day in many quarters about the gradual passing away of the religious spirit from human society, and it is the conviction of some that it is bound to disappear completely from the world in the near future. This view, it must be remembered, is invariably propounded by men who have never experienced any deep religious feeling, and are therefore disposed to deny the existence of any specific religious need in human nature, as in the case, say, of the instinctive life of man. The denial of this need is, however, arbitrary, and is against the testimony of men who are most qualified to speak on it, namely, those who are themselves deeply religious. In the extract we have given above Dean Inge may be taken as ventilating the conviction of all such persons. Religion has an assured place in society, because it is rooted in human nature. There may be some in whom it rouses no response either because they have artificially starved and killed that side of their nature or because they have never allowed it to develop. Such cases are parallel to the examples of men who are impervious to the appeal of art.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**HINDU MYSTICISM ACCORDING TO THE UPANISHADS:** *By Mahendranath Sircar, Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta. Published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., Broadway House, 68-74, Carter Lane, E. C., London. Pages 344. Price 15s. net.*

From the earliest ages of India's history the Upanishads have been the fountain-head of inspiration for the Hindu mind. India's cultural history can be summed up as the expansion and amplification of the thoughts treasured up in these inspired scriptures. Philosophy, theology, religious symbolism and discipline, ethics, psychology and mysticism of the Hindus have all had their starting point with the Upanishads and have at every turn of their evolution returned again and again for fresh inspiration to the same source. Modern India in its yearning for a new orientation of its genius could not yet go beyond the Upanishads whose utterances are as much eternal as their import is universal.

Though commentaries have been written and logical systems constructed before this to bring out the philosophical implications of the Upanishads, to Professor Sircar falls the credit of giving us the first comprehensive and analytic exposition of the mysticism contained in them in its various aspects, and as such this volume will be welcomed by all as a substantial addition to the modern critical studies in English of this glorious heritage of the Hindus. The author has already to his credit three erudite works on Vedanta—"System of Vedantic Thought and Culture," "Comparative studies in Vedanta," and "Mysticism in the Bhagawad Gita." Professor Sircar's deep insight into the mysteries of mysticism, his powers of subtle and refined analysis of mystical realisations and his capacity for clear and profound exposition which have characterised those earlier works have been more

amply fulfilled in the present volume which has excelled them in perspicacity of thought and clearness of expression. As is to be expected, one finds the author with his fine receptivity and elasticity of mental make-up quite at home in the deep waters of the Upanishadic Mysticism.

Professor Sircar has not been unalive to the difficulties in the interpretation of the Upanishadic literature which has given rise to innumerable sectarian controversies. He has tried to keep clear of all theological and philosophical systems and has approached his study with a fresh mind and has tried to evaluate the Upanishadic realisations from a psychological point of view. Professor Sircar thinks that no finished logical systems are presented there; they are rather "intuitions and revelations received in the high flights of inspiration," "rich and definite in conclusions," and making use of "the language of symbols rather than of dialectic." The sublime grandeur and freshness of their teachings fascinate the soul and are a source of perennial inspiration to the mystic and the philosopher.

Professor Sircar defines Mysticism as "the direct awareness of reality conceived as truth." He believes that "mystical experience requires no proof. It is self-evident and self-sufficient. It does not look to anything for its verification." Without doubt the author here presents correctly the mystical attitude and the mystic's contention. But the statement, "Its end is not different from philosophy and its method of approach may not be the same", raises the question whether there can be more than one method of testing truth, whether there is any other approach to truth than that of philosophy.

Professor Sircar holds that "science and philosophy appraise truth in the outer court" whereas "mysticism goes straight into the inner court" which seems to be hardly consistent

with his earlier statement "Philosophy lifts the veil and discloses the mystery of life." One may readily agree with the author that mysticism gives 'peace' and 'bliss,' but then the quest of philosophy is different, though these may be the bye-products of the philosophical attainment of truth. Nor do we think that he need have been so grudging in his admission that "the Upanishads have not forsaken the path of rational realisation of the ultimate truth." However, Professor Sircar maintains that the Upanishadic search after truth and reality are predominantly mystical, "through the intuition of the soul."

A distinction has been drawn between empiric and transcendental intuitions. Exalted and sublime religious feelings are not to be confused with the intuition of Reality. "Mystic experiences are of different orders, some are experiences of the finer appearances, some of reality. The former are forms of psychism, the latter is knowledge." "Intuition is the final term, which is self-consciousness and not other-consciousness. The other-consciousness is the knowledge of not-self. It may cover the revelation of the cosmic mind; but since it is confined to the relative order, it cannot strictly be called intuition." Accordingly, the author would confine the word 'intuition' "to the final knowledge of the Absolute; it is that stage of knowledge where the division of subject and object does not obtain, and is therefore unique and absolute." Again, "the immediacy of the supra-sensuous revelations is to be distinguished from the immediacy of transcendent intuition." According to the author this latter is the highest intuition of the Upanishadic seers.

In this sense intuition is one with *sakshi*, it is Atman. "It is illuminated silence." It transcends "the plane of revelation." "Intuition in the Upanishads has this sense of transcendent existence in which the highest revelation becomes the highest existence." "In its psychological penetration becomes identified with metaphysical truth and it is therefore the identity of being and consciousness."

It is to be realised as the undivided intuition. It transcends duality and all sense of time, duration and space. "Here nothing is apprehended, neither existence, nor relations." "It is called liberation in the sense that the division of consciousness and reality is cancelled by the identity of them." "The knower vanishes here with the known."

This theme which forms the main teaching of the Upanishads has been expanded in the twenty-six chapters of the book from various standpoints and approaches. Though the book suffers to some extent from discursiveness and repetitions, it will nonetheless be welcomed as a brilliant study of the Upanishadic Mysticism by an able mind. Its value would have been more enhanced if the theses in each chapter had been more fully substantiated with ample quotations from the texts.

A TRUE INTERPRETATION OF VEDIC SACRIFICE: *By Srimushna Narasimhacharya, B.A., 9, Kesava Perumal East-Ward Street, Mylapore, Madras. Pages 144. Price Re. 1-8-0.*

Vedic sacrifices constitute the very background of Brahminical culture, life and thought. But scholars have experienced considerable difficulty in correctly interpreting the Mantras used in these sacrifices owing apparently to the use of unfamiliar metaphors employed for conveying the abstract conception of the Supreme Being, the sacrifices being the external means adopted to win the Light of God. There is an old tradition that the Aryan scriptures are the history of the universe written in cyphers having seven keys such as the astronomical, physiological, mythological, ceremonial, etc. While the world-religions have preserved one or more of these keys, the Vedic Rishis have preserved intact all of them.

Western scholars have attempted to interpret the Vedas in the light of mythology. Others including some Indian scholars have endeavoured to apply the key of modern science to the interpretation of the Mantras in the light of chemistry, physics and astronomy. Dr. V. G. Rele has furnished an altogether new and ingenious explana-

tion of the Vedic deities. Convinced that a majority of Hindu scriptural texts are books on subjects of a definitely biological character, Dr. Role has evolved a theory that the Vedic deities represent the several centres of activity in the human nervous system.

The present author, while applying the scientific method to the interpretation of sacrificial rites, has not overlooked to invoke the aid of the traditional interpretation, based on Sayana and the Nirukta. He argues that if the Karmakanda is but a step to the Jnanakanda, and there is no conflict between them, then the right performance of the ritual must lead to the attainment of Jnanam, and ritual is thus but concretised philosophy. With numerous quotations the writer goes on to show how in the scheme of meditation, that sacrifice really is, the Yaga-sala is the human body, being built on its model, and the three fires are the heart, brain and the senses. The Soma juice, again, is but the blood as it circulates from the heart to the sense organs and back, Dorna-kalasa represents the heart, and so on. Space forbids our going in more detail into this original and interesting treatise which deserves our attention, as the author is furnishing a new key to the interpretation of the rituals as methods of training the mind in meditations paving the way for final illumination.

A. S.

DAWN AND OTHER POEMS: *By K. Haidyanathan, B.A. Printed at the H. V. Press, Vellore.*

This is a collection of fourteen poems with interpretations of such common phenomena as dawn or moonrise. The fact that the author proposes to dedicate the profits of the sale for Bihar Earthquake Relief adds a further charm.

THE VOICE OF PRAYER: *Prayers of the centuries selected and arranged by H. G. H. Tunnicliff, B. A. Published by Ivor Nicholson and Watson, Ltd., 44, Essex Street, Strand, London, W. C. 2.*

It is a beautiful collection of high and ennobling thoughts. These outpourings of the heart from mystics and poets of different ages will appeal to all sincere and ardent souls of any race or clime. To pious and devout Christians, the prayers will have a special attraction. They would console them in moments of agony and depression and contribute immensely to attune their mind to the great Redeemer. Each page brings in a new thought for the day, but like an altar-rose its beauty will not fade with the passing of the day. The get-up of the book is extremely fascinating and printing excellent. We earnestly hope that it will have a wide circulation and popularity.

SRIMAD BHAGAVAT GITA, *by S. N. Tadpatikar, M. A., Bhandarkar O. R. Institute, Poona 4. Price Rs. 3.*

The book brings into light the old Kasmiri text of the Gita, supported by the commentators of the 10th century. In the introduction the author suggests some new lines of interpreting the text and its philosophy. He criticises the views of different Oriental and Indian scholars on many important topics such as the date and personality of Sri Krishna, its relationship with Mahabharata and the significance of certain popular terms, like Sankhya, Yoga, Sannyasa, etc. He advances ingenious arguments and quotations to support his own theories. It is a treatise which will appeal more to research students than to the ordinary common mind which lacks interest in controversial and polemic discussions.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Thondar Sangam, Madras (1933-34)

Ever since the colony of Ramakrishnapuram was founded, the Thondar Sangam, Mylapore, was doing some kind of service to improve the conditions of the illiterate poor of the locality. Its main objects are: (1) To collect a band of workers and train them physically, intellectually and spiritually for the efficient service of their followmen, (2) To work among the poor, and by spreading education, help them in relieving their poverty, sickness and ignorance. *An hour's labour of love* per week is the only contribution necessary for being a member of this society.

**Night Schools:** The most important part of its activities lies in conducting three night schools at Ramakrishnapuram, Punthottam Cheri and Pallakumanujan Cheri, the last two being Harijan centres. The first one has three sections, *viz.*, for young children, youths and adults. The children are given tuition 6 days a week and the youths 5 days, while for the adults, there being no regular classes, education is being imparted through story-telling, news-giving and the reading of Bharatam. Deserving students are supplied with necessary school fees, text books, note books, slates, etc. Occasional lantern lectures are arranged exhibiting the life of Prahlada, Dhruva, the Adi-Dravida Saints and the prevention of malaria, cholera, small-pox and such other hygienic subjects. Anniversary celebrations, festivals, Bhajanas, and excursions were conducted to arouse healthy moral and religious feelings in people's hearts. To encourage economy and thrift a Co-operative Savings Bank was started in 1931, and it has been working successfully from its inception. *Panchayats* have been formed to look after the general welfare of the residents and sanitation, and to settle internal disputes.

**Hospital Library Service:** At the request of the Guild of Service the

Sangam undertook hospital service as one of its multifarious activities. The members visited the two main hospitals and distributed, books, magazines, pictures, etc., to those patients who could read, and themselves read to them who could not do so. Besides they tried to cheer up their depressed hearts with gramophone records and other musical entertainments. In the year under review 110 visits were made by the members.

As a mark of appreciation for the help rendered, the authorities of the Madras Library Association have presented a silver shield to the Society.

During the Kapaliswar temple festival the Sangam enrolled about 120 volunteers and did service to the devotees by protecting women and children from the rush of the crowd.

There is a *Study Circle*, whose object is to imbue the members with the true culture and the lofty ideals of our nation. The Sangam also helped the Ramakrishna Mission in its cyclone relief work in the Shiyali Taluk in January, 1934. Its total receipts are Rs. 328-9-2 and total disbursements, Rs. 578-9-2, thus incurring a debt of Rs. 250. The management earnestly hopes that the amount will be soon repaid and its work carried on with greater success by the sympathetic help and co-operation of the generous public. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by: Swami Rudrananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.

### Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Podanur (Coimbatore)

This institution was started early in 1930 as a boarding home with only one boy. It has now gradually developed into a residential school with 49 students. There are seven workers of whom three are graduates. All of them board and live in the Vidyalaya itself. The work is divided into several departments each under a captain with a batch of boys to assist him. All the

work, not excluding cooking itself, is done by the boys themselves without the aid of any servant. The boys come from all sections of Hindu Society including Harijans. No differentiation is made among the inmates on grounds of caste or wealth. Love of country and service are taught through national songs and cleaning of slums, while religious education is imparted by narrating stories from the lives of saints and seers of our motherland. There is a *court* where the judges are elected by the boys themselves to decide disputes, settle difficulties and suggest improvements. A circulating medal system has been introduced to kindle a spirit of emulation, which has created a noble desire for getting distinction in studies, cleanliness and efficient work among the boys. They are medically examined twice a year and their weights are taken every month. A journal has been started to which articles and drawings are contributed by the pupils. Moving classes are often held in the surrounding villages. In the morning the boys help to clean the villages, and in the evening talks are given with the help of magic lantern and gramophone. This creates a lively interest in the village and sweet relationship between the villagers and the pupils of the Vidyalaya. Occasionally they are taken on excursions and visits to spinning and weaving mills, Agricultural and Forest Colleges and such other places of importance for enlightening them and improving their general fund of knowledge. The present need of the institution is to have a permanent place with necessary buildings for the school and the boarding house. To meet these demands sufficient funds are necessary, and the management hopes this will be forth-coming from the kind and sympathetic public.

### **Relief Works of the Ramakrishna Mission (1932-34)**

The Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission beg to place before the public a short account of their relief activities in different parts of the country :

*Tornado Relief in Mymensing 1932.*—A severe Tornado blew over this town and some of its adjacent villages. Hundreds of lives were lost. Thousands of trees were uprooted and all the houses and huts were completely blown away. A centre was opened from which 177 mds. of rice with other kinds of food-stuff were distributed among 500 recipients belonging to 5 villages. Besides giving medical relief, some 100 pieces of new clothes were also distributed.

*Fire Relief in 1933.*—In February, 1933 fire broke out in two different villages in the District of Jessore and after thorough inspection our workers supplied house-building materials and cloth to the most needy persons, the total cost amounting to Rs. 258-14-9. We had to undertake fire relief work in Murshidabad and Birbhum where we erected 28 and 13 houses respectively. We also helped the most deserving families with Rs. 50 in Manbhum, with Rs. 100 in Bankura and supplied building materials worth Rs. 86 in Bhuvanagar.

*Flood Relief Work in Midnapore and Orissa, 1933.*—On account of heavy and continuous downpour the whole subdivision of Contai in the district of Midnapore in Bengal and a large portion of the Districts of Puri and Cuttack in Orissa were visited by devastating floods. Huts collapsed and the suffering of the poor knew no bounds. Immediately we had to commence relief work in the affected areas, and besides clothes and medicines, doles of rice were freely distributed from 10 centres in Midnapore and Orissa. The centres in Contai sub-division had also to supply fodder for cattle and paddy (seeds) for sowing, in addition to constructing huts for the homeless.

*Test Works in Orissa, 1934.*—To help the poor labourers who were meeting starvation in their face we opened test works and begun the restoration of tanks and wells that had been filled up with sand and salt water. From two centres 11 new wells were dug and 5 old ones were repaired while 11 tanks were re-excavated.

*Fire Relief in April 1934.*—The poor villagers in Orissa who were hard hit by scourges of flood and scarcity of food became absolutely helpless when fire consumed their last remnant of protection. In spite of our paucity of funds we had to take up the work and supply hut-building materials to 142 destitute families.

Moreover our Mission at *Rangoon*, (Burma) undertook flood relief work in the Pegu and Toungoo Districts—which lasted from August to October, 1932. Rice, clothes and financial help for building huts were given to the sufferers—which amounted to Rs. 724-7-0.

The Mission expresses its deep sense of gratitude to all kind donors and sympathisers who promptly responded to its appeal and co-operated with it in various ways.

### **Ananda Ashrama, Dacca**

The Ananda Ashrama is the only educational institution of its kind working for the uplift of women in East Bengal. A detailed account of the activities of the Ashrama was published in its 3rd report. The most important feature of the institution is its various industrial sections which train the students to earn an independent living. The daily routine of the institution is as follows: Getting up 5 A.M.; Bhajan, meditation, etc. 5-30 A.M.; cleaning 6 to 6-30 A.M.; tiffin 6-30 A.M.; study 7 to 8 A.M.; art class 8 to 10 A.M.; bath and cleaning 10 to 11 A.M.; meals 11 to 12 A.M.; school 12 to 3-30 P.M.; cleaning 3-30 to 4 P.M.; stitching, weaving, music, art class, etc., 4 to 5 P.M.; tiffin 5 P.M.; play and walking 5-30 to 6-30 P.M.; Arati 6-30 to 7 P.M.; study 7 to 9 P.M.; meals 9 P.M.; retiring to bed 9-30 P.M.

During the year under report (1933-34) the total number of girls in the Ashram were 50, of whom 16 were free students and 3 concession holders. The monthly expense of the Ashram came to Rs. 550. It is needless to add that the Ashram is slowly getting established, and receiving the appreciation and help of the local public.

### **Sri Ramakrishna Mission Seva Samiti, Karimganj, Sylhet**

This Institution has completed the sixteenth year of its useful philanthropic career. The conjoined report for 1932 and 1933 shows that the Society has served the local public in diverse ways in spite of its insufficient resources. It has a pretty good library which is being utilised profitably by the students. Religious classes and lectures were held in the premises of the Ashrama and outside. During the period under review, the Samiti managed creditably two Primary Schools and one Night School for the spread of education among the backward classes. It maintained a charitable Homœopathic Dispensary for the helpless sufferers of the town and the adjacent villages, and also nursed eight destitute patients in their own houses, suffering from typhoid and other acute diseases. A training corps has been formed for the teaching of skilful nursing under an expert. The Society helped some poor families with doles of rice, clothes and money, and constructed one tin-shed for a leper inhabitant of an adjoining village. It celebrated birthday anniversaries of the Great Masters with regular worship, bhajana and feeding of the poor hungry Narayanas. The Society now appeals to the generous public for money for the building of a Students' Home and a Night School.



Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman"

—Swami Vivekananda

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

APRIL, 1935

[No. 12

## HINDU ETHICS



एते त्रयोदशाकाराः पृथक् सत्यैकलक्षणाः ।  
भजन्ते सत्यमेवेह बृंहयन्ते च भारत ॥  
सत्यं नामाव्ययं नित्यमविकारि तथैव च ।  
सर्वधर्माविलेखन योगेनैतदवायते ॥  
नास्ति सत्यात् परोधर्मो नावृतात् पातकं परम् ।  
स्थितिर्हि सत्यं धर्मस्य तस्मात् सत्यं न लोपयेत् ॥  
ये वदन्तीह सत्यानि प्राणत्यागेऽप्युपस्थिते ।  
प्रमाणभूता भूतानां दुर्गाण्यतितरन्ति ते ॥

These thirteen forms of virtue\*, though apparently distinct from one another, have but one common fundamental feature, *viz.*, Truth. All these, O Bharata, serve Truth and are expressions of it.

Truth is immutable, eternal and unchangable. It may be acquired conjointly with other virtues, without militating against them.

There is no duty which is higher than Truth, and no sin more heinous than untruth. Indeed Truth is the very foundation of righteousness. For this reason one should never let Truth be neglected.

They that always speak Truth in this world, even when life is at stake, are exemplars for all creatures to imitate, and succeed in overcoming all difficulties.

—SHANTI PARVA (CLXII—22, 10 & 24 & CX—II)

\* Mentioned in the previous issue.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

*By Swami Saradananda*

## CHAPTER VI

### **The Master and Mathuranath**

*Hark ! O the supreme among the Kurus, I shall describe unto thee the most important aspects of My Divine Glory, of which the details are inexhaustible.*

Gita X, 19.

*A big flower takes a longer period to blossom fully.*

**M**ENTION has already been made of the fact that the gradual unfoldment of the teacher-aspect in the Master's life was taking place, to a great extent, before the very presence of Rani Rasmani and Mathuranath. With regard to the manifestation of the higher aspects of human character, the Master used to remark, "A big flower takes much longer time to blossom fully ; a pithy tree grows very slowly." Not a little time and struggle were needed in the Master's life too for the manifestation of the unique aspect of the teacher ! It required severe practice continually for twelve long years. This is not the place to give a detailed description of his spiritual practices.\* Here, what we are particularly concerned with is the Guru-aspect of his character which blossoms like a lotus under the influence of the light of knowledge. Accordingly we shall deal chiefly with this topic

alone. Nevertheless, in the course of our procedure with the subject, other things indirectly connected with this main topic will incidentally come in. For instance, those devotees, with whom the Master was connected during the earlier period of this stage of development in him, will certainly come within the purview of this topic.

*The Master's unique relation with Mathuranath: the characteristics of the latter.*

The Master's relation with Mathuranath was indeed a unique affair. Mathuranath was wealthy and at the same time noble-minded ; engaged in worldly affairs but yet a devotee at heart ; often hasty but yet intelligent ; a man of fiery temper but at the same time possessed of untiring patience and strong determination ; equipped with English education and argumentative by nature but never too dogmatic to be convinced by cogent reasons. Although a sincere believer, he would never accept blindly anything and everything that might be said on religion, no matter whether such statements came from the Master, or his family-preceptor or whomsoever else. He was generous and straightforward, but never to be cheated in his estate-affairs on that account. On the other hand, he was found occasionally even to resort to such mischievous

\*These have been described at length by the author in another volume.



policies and underhand methods as are usually adopted by rich landlords for the increase of their wealth. In fact, as Rani Rasmani had no male issue, Mathuranath, her youngest son-in-law, was her right-hand man in the able management and supervision of the estate affairs, although her other sons-in-law too were living at that time; and her name became so famous in those days only because of the rare combination of Mathuranath's acute intelligence with that of the Rani.

*Rani Rasmani and Mathuranath help the Master unawares in the unfoldment of the teacher-aspect in him. The friends as well as the enemies of divine incarnations help them in manifesting their latent powers.*

"But what is this digression for?" our readers may question us here; "why is this Mathuranath brought in, all on a sudden, while the topic is concerned with the Master?" The reason is this: When the divine attitude was gradually manifesting itself in the Master like the butterfly issuing from its cocoon, it was Mathuranath who caught a faint glimpse of its future glory and appointed himself as its chief protector and helper. Under a holy inspiration, Rani Rasmani built the temple which was to be the fit place for the evolution of that unique character; and Mathuranath, her son-in-law, under a similar inspiration, supplied unstintedly whatever was needed for the manifestation of that Divinity. Of course, we are

able to understand this divine purpose only now after the lapse of such a long time. But these twin personalities seem to have never been able to fully understand why they did all those things, notwithstanding that they used to have merely a faint occasional glimpse of the future significance of their actions.

This fact seems to be a common feature in the lives of the great prophets of all ages. It is found that some mysterious power remains behind them removing all obstacles from their path, protecting them in every way under all circumstances and bringing all other persons entirely under their control. But nevertheless those persons, who thus become instrumental in the growth of divine personalities, never come to realise that whatever they do, out of love for or hatred against these prophets, becomes always helpful to them by removing the obstacles from their way and kindling their latent spirit of devotion. And people read with wonder their true significance only after a pretty long time. See for instance the effect of Kaikeyi's sending away Rama to the forest, of the life-long efforts of Kamsa to frustrate the mission of the Divine Child by keeping Vasudeva and Devaki in prison, of King Suddhodhana's building the pleasure garden in order to prevent Siddhartha from imbibing the spirit of renunciation, of the cruel attempt of the Kapalika Buddhists on the life of Sankara by means of black magic, of the malicious antagonism of some against Chaitanya's religion

of love or finally, of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the pretext of a false charge. In every instance the result was just the opposite of what was expected, as in the story of the monk who used to repeat "Thou hast misunderstood me, O Rama!"\*

\* The story runs as follows: A monk who had long been travelling constantly from one place of pilgrimage to another carrying by himself his bundle of necessary articles once got the idea that if he had a horse he would be relieved of the burden. Accordingly he began to repeat aloud, "Let me have a horse, O Rama!" Now the king's army was then passing through that very place where our monk was wandering about. One of the mares belonging to that army happened to give birth to a young one on the way. The horseman concerned was put to much trouble on that account and did not know what to do with the new-born colt that was yet too young to keep pace with the army which was to move from the place in no time. Finally he decided to get a man to carry the colt, and went out on this errand. Before long, his eye fell on our horse-begging monk, and finding him a robust man, without any further consideration the soldier forced him to

Nevertheless, the powerful and sagacious enemies as well as the loving friends have always applied their shrewd policies with quite different motives and will do the same in future too. Among these helpers of the prophets, the two groups, *viz*, the friendly and the inimical, have got this much of difference between them that the latter remains completely in the dark regarding the motives and the workings of the Divine Power, while the former, by following it with sincere devotion, attains occasionally some slight knowledge of it; and this knowledge gradually frees them from all desires and ultimately leads them to complete liberation and eternal peace. Mathuranath belonged to this last mentioned group.

carry the colt. The monk, thus put to great difficulty, began to repeat, "Thou hast misunderstood me, O Rama!" For, while he wanted a horse to carry his luggage, he himself had to carry the colt.

## WHY NOT 'RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA'?

### Is there a Conflict between Religion and Philosophy in India?

A few months back, Prof. Wadia of the Mysore University delivered an address on "Philosophy and Religion in Mysore," on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Bangalore Mythic Society. Some of the points referred to by the learned Professor in the course of his address have a relation to a much wider area than the State of Mysore. They are as

much true with regard to the religious life of the rest of India as they are with that of Mysore. We therefore deem it fit to make the following comments on these points of wider importance under the more comprehensive title—"Why not 'Religion and Philosophy in India'?"

It was opined by the learned Professor that there is a conflict between religion and philosophy in this country, and as an illustration of this conflict he referred to the

existence of caste system in spite of the universal principles of Vedanta, the most influential school of philosophy in India. The religious folk of this country have always taken pride in the thought that it is in India and India alone that religion and philosophy have gone hand in hand, each enriching and invigorating the other and helping, by this harmonious relation, the growth of a spiritual ideal according to which reason and faith have no need to wrangle for the allegiance of man. In the history of European thought, although religion and philosophy are known to have been united in a companionate alliance at an early period, they parted away as soon as they came to their own, and have ever since been at bitter feuds beyond any hope of reconciliation. In regard to India, however, the prevailing view has always been just the contrary. Right from the Vedic Age onward, philosophy has stood in the relation of an off-spring to religion, having had its source not so much in the element of wonder as in the desire to overcome moral and physical evil. In conformity, as it were, with the highest Indian traditions of filial tie, their cordial relations have never been sundered through all the vicissitudes of their career extending over thousands of years. This at least has been the view entertained by the religious men of India, and to many of them therefore the Professor's opinion may come as a shock.

### **The Philosophical Approach**

The matter however requires a fuller consideration, if all its implications are to be elucidated properly. Owing to the very close relationship between religion and philosophy in this country, there is a general tendency among Indians to take the subject matter of both these as identical. However true this may be in regard to Indian thought, it is necessary to draw a distinction between these two in their usual academic significance, especially because that will help us to understand the uniqueness of Indian culture in having combined these two branches of thought that war with each other in other cultural systems. The subject matter of philosophy is the True, and the philosopher is one who seeks to give a logically consistent description of experience. The nature of the subject renders his approach towards it essentially intellectual. His success in the pursuit is to be measured by the degree of disinterestedness with which he proceeds on the analysis of experience. Complete disinterestedness, however, is a quality that is impossible of attainment in this world; yet the orthodox philosopher is expected to perform this impossible feat and study his subject matter without any intrusion of feelings or consideration of its consequences on the world at large. He is to segregate his personality from the subject of his study and treat the structure of Reality as if it existed quite independently of the perceiving mind

with no vital relation to the Truth of man. He is to ignore completely that just as in the case of our so-called true intellectual perceptions, the refined or purified feelings of man have also something corresponding to their contents in Reality. His conclusions too are not to be judged by their effects on his character and personality or from their repercussions on the life of men in general; the cold categories of the intellect under whose inspiration they have sprung are also to be their sole judge. Their validity lies in their logical consistency, not in their human worth.

### **The Religious Approach : its Origin, Method and Results**

The religious approach towards the study of experience is however quite different. The incentive here is not so much the curiosity to *know* as the yearning to *be better*. No doubt, the human being finds himself placed in an enigmatic world bristling with problems for the intellect to solve; but the reactions of the religious mind are not to the same extent drawn by this aspect of experience as by the oppressing sense of imperfection and insecurity that life exercises on it. The religious man finds himself helplessly under the thralldom of the flesh and its desires. Something within tells him that he is not essentially their slave, but so secure is their hold on him that to effect an escape from their sway seems beyond the limits of his personal powers. The whole of Nature, both external and internal, seems to be conspiring against his

struggling self in an effort to keep him bound by the shackles of the flesh. The hopelessness of the task does not however stifle the urgings of the inward monitor, but only makes one all the more discontented with life.

An equally potent factor for dissatisfaction he finds in the general insecurity in which life in this world is placed. Nature seems to have set in ambush her malicious forces at every turn along the road of life, to pounce upon and destroy the heedless pilgrims that sojourn along its dangerous course. There are on the one hand the uncontrollable furies of the blind forces of Nature—the storms, the draughts, the floods, the tidal waves, the famines and the incurable diseases of the body and the mind,—and there are, on the other hand, man-made dangers of an equally formidable nature—wars, economic distress, unemployment, heartless cruelty and oppression, ingratitude, betrayal of love and trust and a host of other factors that civilisation has made us all familiar with. The progress of science and the harnessing of some of Nature's forces may have to a certain extent mitigated the dangers from the blind forces of Nature but the man-made diseases of human society only seem to grow into alarming proportions with the march of civilisation and the growing complicity of social relationships. Over and above these dangers attendant on life's pilgrimage is the sure and certain doom of death that awaits even the cleverest

of our kind who manage to overcome the other dangers and carve out a way for themselves in life. Nature seems to have made man with laborious care only to kill him in the end. But even in the midst of these baffling circumstances the human spirit yearns for security and immortal life.

What sets the religious mind on the path of enquiry is the urgent need it feels to overcome these twofold challenges of life—the moral evil within and the doom of extinction without—, in other words the desire for a perfect life, in contrast to mere wonder or curiosity to know as in the case of the philosopher. As the attitude is different, so too are the procedure and the result obtained. The philosopher, as we have already said, is to maintain an attitude of disinterestedness and study the world of experience abstracting it from his personality. But the religious man views experience as interpenetrated by the interests of his life. For him his personality forms an integral whole with experience. The study of the latter therefore means for him the discovery of the link subsisting between the two and the solution of the problem with which the enquiry began, namely, the facts of moral evil and death. His tool in this enquiry does not consist merely in the cold intellectual faculty; it embraces the whole personality of man. His intellect is enlivened by feeling and energised by will. When this whole and harmonious development of personality is completed, it

matures into what is called the faculty of intuition which enables him to view experience as a whole and probe into its very depths, unlike the philosopher whose predilection in favour of the intellect and neglect of feeling confine him to a partial and distorted view of experience. In the subject matter of his quest also there is not that onesided insistence on the True as in the case of the philosopher. The search is as much for the Good and the Beautiful as it is for the True, and the intuitive power which forms the main instrument in the quest, when perfected by the complete integration of all the faculties of man, reveals that the core of Reality is not merely the True, but is simultaneously the Good and the Beautiful. In fact the uniqueness of the knowledge that the religious mind attains in its perfection consists in the direct apprehension that what is the True is the Good, and that what is both the True and the Good is also the Beautiful. In other words, the distinction between fact and value which a mere intellectual approach can never get over stands resolved before the illumined gaze of the religious mind.

In the matter of the valuation of the results obtained also, the religious quest stands in contrast to the purely philosophic one. Logical consistency and the adequacy of the explanations of facts form the sole criterion in determining the merits and demerits of a philosophic system. But what determines the success or otherwise

of a seeker in the sphere of religion does not consist so much in the value that the intellectual and literary standards discover in his statements as in the transformation observable in his life and character. The statements of religious truth may indeed be clothed in logic and in polished language ; but that in itself is no indication of success in religious life, unless the conquest of moral evil and death have been achieved through a realisation of the essentially spiritual nature of Reality. Thus the perfection of religion consists in saintliness while a type of intellectual obesity is the goal of philosophy.

#### **The Fate of Philosophy in Europe**

We have drawn at some length this contrast between religion and philosophy in order to bring out clearly the uniqueness of Indian thought in having effected an inseparable union between these two branches of culture. The failure of Europe in this respect is only too patent, as indicated by the hostility of philosophy towards religion in that part of the world. No doubt, an attempt was made in Medieval times to effect a union between them, but it failed eventually with the intellectual advancement of Europe. It may be interesting to investigate why such a combination did not succeed in the case of Europe. To our mind this failure is to be attributed to the denial of religious liberty, as it inevitably happens when religion is controlled by an ecclesiastical hierarchy created and supported by the State. The

State and the Church undertook to keep the conscience of men. They formulated the creeds which people were to swallow under the threat of the rack and the burning pyre. The Scripture could not be interpreted in the light of one's understanding or spiritual insight ; they were to be understood as the State and the Church wanted men to understand. In other words, under the influence of extraneous agencies as the State and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, religion became more a branch of politics than a force for spiritual upliftment. And politics, it must be remembered, is not the field for the display of man's speculative genius or for the practice of saintly innocence. The result of this was that the intellectual sections of Europe had to bid good-bye to the heresy-hunting religious traditions of their land and proceed on independent lines in their quest after an intellectual solution of the riddle of the universe. Philosophy thus separated itself from religion, but this challenge of the intellect was to produce a more momentous consequence than the mere fact of separation. With its liberation from the tutelage of religion, philosophy began to rely more and more on the experimental sciences for its data, as these were more in agreement with its intellectual bias and its demand for studying experience after isolating it from the experimenter. But eventually the servant was to oust the master from his seat of authority and appropriate the sole right of studying

experience from the point of view of the intellect. In other words, philosophy as an independent branch of study waned in importance and experimental science came to take its place. And to-day in a thinker like Bertrand Russell this movement has reached its culmination; for according to Russell philosophy has no subject matter of its own, and it is to end its glorious career soon by merging itself in science. Science, therefore, is the philosophy of modern Europe.

### **The Limitations of Science**

There are champions of science to-day who look upon their favourite subject as the only panacea for all the ills of the world. But they forget that while science has in many respects made us familiar with the mechanism of the universe, it has not cast even a gleam of light on the mystery of it. As Prof. Radhakrishnan says in his latest book, *East and West in Religion*, "The scientific interpretation of the universe which resolves the world into an invisible game of billiards, where the atoms are the balls which collide and pass on their motion from one to another, states only how things happen and not why. Even in those who think that further questions are unnecessary, there stirs the awareness of an attitude yet unrealised. They vaguely feel that the universe has a depth of being beyond that made known to the senses and the intellect. Our sense of wonder and our sensitiveness to the environing mystery

are in no way diminished by progress in science." Science or the philosophy of Europe can never overcome this defect because of the inherent presupposition in its attitude and method that the world can be studied in its essential truth by completely isolating it from the mind that experiences it. Therefore, while one should be thankful to science for throwing much light on the mechanical aspect of the universe and for rendering it possible for the human being to establish control over various forces of Nature, it will be a vain expectation indeed, if science or scientific method is relied upon for a solution of life's mystery and its deepest problems. On the other hand, it is even necessary to recognise the fact that with all its boasted achievements in the realm of matter, it has absolutely failed to make the life of man happier in terms of mental peace and poise, contentment, inward joy and freedom from fear and worries. The fate of modern Europe is proof positive to this fact. Not only has it miserably failed in this respect, but has, by the apotheosis of the scientific method, created a positive antagonism in men against the intuitive method of religion, the one way for the solution of life's mystery and the attainment of lasting happiness, and has to that extent made a positive contribution towards the misery of mankind. Such indeed are the disastrous results of the declaration of independence on the part of the intellect from the federation

of human faculties in the history of European thought.

### **Relation between Science, Philosophy and Religion in India**

Let us now turn our attention to the relation between religion and philosophy in Indian thought. The review of the relation existing between them in Europe would make it possible for us to appreciate better the significance of the same obtaining in India. That the relation has always been cordial, we have stated already. With the single exception of the Charvaka system, the Indian version of materialism, every system of philosophy in India, whether orthodox or heterodox, has allied itself with religion. In the absence of a jealous Church and a persecuting State, religion was kept aloof from politics, and men of speculative genius could therefore find, within its fold itself, ample scope for the exercise of their speculative genius. As a consequence there was no hard and fast distinction between religious men, philosophers and scientists. Eminent Indian thinkers like Yagnavalkya, Gautama, Kanada, Badarayana, Jaimini, Gaudapada, Asanga, Nagarjuna, Dinnaga, Sarikara, Ramanuja, Madhva and a host of others are as well-known for their spiritual greatness as they are for their philosophical acumen. Men like Nagarjuna, Bhaskara, Charaka and Susruta are as great authorities in natural sciences as they are in religion and philosophy.

Nor is there recognised any hard and fast distinction between the

subject matter and method of religion and philosophy. No doubt in the academic study of philosophy the rational faculty of man is given the fullest scope, but even in its widest wheelings, philosophy centres round truths whose validity has been established by the intuitive method. In India the limitations of the intellect have always been recognised, and along with it also the futility of setting it up as an independent and all-sufficient means for the solution of life's mystery. Reason can justify, can in certain respects act even as a stepping stone to, the great verities of life; but it cannot in itself discover them. Cold intellectualism gets benumbed before it reaches the higher levels of the soul. The quest of the True abstracted from the Good and the Beautiful, the study of the world independent of man is a fruitless enterprise as far as the solution of life's mystery is concerned. It is this characteristic of Indian thought that is expressed with such telling effect in that famous conversation supposed to have taken place between a wandering Indian philosopher and Socrates, the great thinker of ancient Greece. When in reply to a question, Socrates told the Indian sage that the world is the object of his study, the saintly visitor from our land is reported to have remarked, "How can you know the world without knowing man?" The pragmatist's dictum that man is the measure of things is a statement of great significance. A world divorced from man, a



Reality disconnected with his hopes and fears, loves and aspirations is a pure abstraction—a dream of the fanatics of the intellect. A study of such a conception may yield the little things of life, but not its greatest prize. For Reality is not only the True, but also the Good and the Beautiful—it is Sat-Chit-Ananda. The inseparable alliance between religion and philosophy in India is a recognition of this fundamental fact.

### **Where Vedanta differs from Science**

It is sometimes said that Vedanta, the most important system of Indian thought, is not a religion but a science. This however is a misrepresentation, an example of suppressing the main characteristic of a thing by too great an insistence on a secondary one. In maintaining experience (Anubhuti) to be the final test of spiritual facts, and in offering the highest generalisation of the universe that the human mind can conceive of, Vedanta embodies in itself some of the most admirable features of modern science, but that in itself does not lower it or, as some would prefer, elevate it to the status of a science. It may be a scientific religion, but yet it remains a religion for all that. For the Vedantic inquiry has its origin in the religious impulse, and it reaches its consummation in the religious ideal, namely, the overcoming of the sense of sin and the fear of death. As an illustration of this we point to the fact that of the preliminary disciplines required of a

student of Vedanta, the most important is Mumukshutwa, an intense desire for liberation. The inquiry that springs from it is not, as in the case of the scientist, a dispassionate and dis-interested quest abstracted from one's personality and the deepest longings of the heart. It is on the other hand an undertaking to which the whole fervour of one's heart has to be harnessed, an activity of momentous consequence to one's life, which one would not have undertaken but for the tremendous moral force urging from within. Nor does its end consist in arriving at a theory of the universe but in an entire transformation of one's personality and one's outlook on life and its values. A scientist begins his career with a sense of curiosity gripping his mind, and ends it perhaps as an intellectual giant; the Vedantin begins his in response to a moral and a personal problem, and ends it in the status of sainthood.

### **Philosophy as the Generalissimo of Religion**

This inter-relationship with life is the most important characteristic of every school of Indian philosophy. It is also their point of contact with religion. Whether it is in Samkhya or Yoga, Nyaya or Vaisesika, Purva Mimamsa or Vedanta, one does not, according to Indian traditions, deserve the name of a philosopher, unless one has brought one's life into conformity with one's teaching. Whether the central point of one's philosophy be the

unity of all existence or the separateness of the self from all objects or the supremacy of an all-embracing intelligence over the universe, the function of the philosopher does not end in a mere dialectical demonstration of these teachings. Such a demonstration is counted as next to nothing, unless the ideas become clothed in flesh and blood in the daily life of the thinker. Realisation not speculation, Jivanmukti not barren intellectualism is the goal of Indian philosophy, and in accepting such a goal, philosophy has acknowledged its allegiance to religion. It is contented to play the part of the generalissimo of religion in warring against the great enemies of man, namely, death and moral evil.

### **The Effects of Indian Philosophy on Social Life**

This long string of reflections has carried us far into the intricate question of the relation between philosophy, science and religion, leaving behind the original question with which we started, namely: Prof. Wadia's remark that there is a conflict between religion and philosophy in this country. Religion, it must be remembered, has a two-fold function—one in relation to the individual and the other in relation to the society. When Prof. Wadia speaks of the relation between religion and philosophy, his remark is too wide in so far as he fails to make this distinction. We have tried to show in the foregoing paragraphs that as far as the individual side is concerned, there is

perfect harmony between religion and philosophy in this country. The Professor's example of a conflict as seen in the existence of caste system side by side with the universal ideals of Vedanta really refers to the question as to how far India has worked out the implications of her philosophy in her social life. We must in the first place point out that in every country there is noticed this gulf of difference between the actual and the ideal, between the hopes that man entertains in his best moments and his actual performance amidst the hard realities of life. India too is not an exception to this rule. But it may be questioned whether caste system is after all such an engine of tyranny purposely devised by our social leaders in flagrant violation of the universal principles of Vedanta? Acute differences of opinion are likely to occur on this point. To cite the law of Karma in justification of man-made distinctions would be but playing into the hands of hypocrisy. A correct estimate of the caste system can be made only if it is viewed in reference to the historical, racial, and economic problems of Indian society in the past. The selfishness of man and the exigencies of life's struggle must no doubt have contributed mostly to the social rigidity, the spirit of exclusiveness and the oppressive tendencies characteristic of caste in actual working. But its ideals are great. The influence of Vedantic thinkers has infused into this

system of social organisation the idea of Swadharma according to which every duty faithfully discharged is an efficacious form of worshipping the Supreme. By such worship every one becomes entitled to the highest goal irrespective of one's social status. This conception of the equal sanctity of all work, which Indian philosophy impressed on our form of social organisation, certainly acted as a leavening influence on it, and mitigated to some extent at least the cruelties and selfishness of life's struggle.

We point out this in order to show that Indian philosophy has not remained entirely aloof from the collective life of the race too.

But we do admit that it has yet to influence our social life in many more ways and that in order to make our social life consistent with the highest ideals of our religion and philosophy, we have to fight against the forces of greed, selfishness and oppression which are characteristic of the brutal struggle of life. In this respect the Professor's remarks are not out of place. This infusion of the social life with the spiritual ideals of the nation was a favourite idea of Swami Vivekananda. His doctrine of Practical Vedanta is largely a call to effect such a useful synthesis of philosophy and social life. The path of progress for India lies in such a course.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA\*

*By Swami Ranganathananda*

**T**HE two important problems which absorb the attention of Sri Krishna are the nature of the self and the problem of conduct. Of these, he proceeds to a consideration of the former first, and disposes of the latter afterwards. The ego in man is the cause of all errors and the origin of all false values. It is that to which we refer all our judgments regarding everything in our experience, and being itself limited and circumscribed, it is not able to confer infallibility to its judgments. Hence the errors. Hence also doubts, which demand further enquiry. Deeper inquiry reveals the totally unreal character of the ego, thus shifting the self to a deeper

reality. Here we come to the great conception of the Sakshi (Witness), which no philosophy in the West has yet arrived at, but towards which Western thought is steadily and unmistakably proceeding through its application of scientific methods to the problems of psychology. That the ego is unreal, that man's individuality does not consist in the ego, is what modern biology and psychology also teach. Says H. G. Wells in his "Science of Life", that voluminous digest of all the latest biological knowledge:

"Alone, in the silence of the night and on a score of thoughtful occasions we have demanded: Can this self, so vividly central to my

\* Vide "Sri Krishna in the Gita," in the January issue,

universe, so greedily possessive of the world, ever cease to be? Without it surely there is no world at all! And yet this conscious self dies nightly when we sleep, and we cannot trace the stages by which in its stages it crept to an awareness of its own existence."

"Personality may be only one of Nature's methods, a convenient provisional delusion of considerable strategic value." (Page 852).

"The more intelligent and comprehensive man's picture of the universe has become, the more intolerable has become his concentration upon the individual life with its inevitable final rejection."

"He escapes from his ego by this merger (identification with and participation in a greater being), and acquires an impersonal immortality in the association, his identity dissolving into the greater identity. This is the essence of much religious mysticism, and it is remarkable how closely the biological analysis of individuality brings us to the mystics. The individual, according to this second line of thought, saves himself by losing himself. But in mystical teaching he loses himself in the Deity, and in the scientific interpretation of life he forgets himself as Tom, Dick or Harry and discovers himself as Man. The Buddhist treatment of the same necessity is to teach that the individual life is a painful delusion from which men escape by conquest of individual desire. Western mystic and Eastern sage find a strong effect of endorsement in modern science and the every-day teaching of practical morality; both teach that self must be subordinated, that self is a method and not an end." (Ibid. pp. 878 and 879.)

Modern biological and psychological analysis must go deeper in

the search for man's sense of individuality in order to avert the conclusion of Nihilism. We in India see behind the ego, which is part of the ceaseless flow of Nature, the entity called Sakshi, who witnesses all this flow and change and whose philosophical significance has yet to be fully grasped. Yet, all true knowledge, all valid judgments in logic or science imply unmistakably a shifting of the subject from the ego to the Sakshi. When science insists on studying things from the point of view of the objects themselves by eliminating the personal equation, it is, in effect, emphasising only the Sakshibhava. For, the limited vision of the ego gives place to the unlimited and universal vision of the Sakshi by the practice of scientific or intellectual detachment. In ordinary life also, when we insist on what is called impartial judgment, what is achieved is this same ego-elimination. The two important characteristics of the Sakshi are its detachment and universality. It marks the highest point of perfection in the process of de-personalisation. Thus it is the fulfilment of the scientific attitude as well. That it is the fulfilment and aim of ethical, including religious, discipline also will be shown afterwards.

When Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that the Self of man is unborn, immortal and eternal, he is referring to this Sakshi.

"The unreal never is. The Real never is not. Men possessed with the knowledge of the Truth fully know both these." (Gita, II, 16).<sup>1</sup>

"And the Supreme Purusha in this body is also called the Looker-on, the Permitter, the Supporter, the Experiencer and the great Lord,

1. नासतो विद्यते भावो नामावो विद्यते सतः ।  
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥

and as the Highest Self." (Gita XIII, 22.)<sup>2</sup>

"Transmigrating from one body to another, or residing (in the same) or experiencing, as He is united with the Gunas,—the deluded do not see Him, but those who have the eye of wisdom behold Him." (XV, 10)<sup>3</sup>

"He who is free from the notion of egoism, whose intelligence is not affected (by good or evil), though he kills these people, he kills not, nor is bound (by the action)." (XVIII, 17.)<sup>4</sup>

The ego being a changing entity is unreal; so also are all its objects. Hence Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to bear all dualities of experience like heat and cold, pain and pleasure, and identify himself with the permanent and unchanging Self—the Sakshi.

"Notions of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure, are born, O son of Kunthi, only of the contact of the senses with their objects. They have a beginning and an end. They are impermanent in their nature. Bear them patiently, O descendant of Bharata." (Gita, II, 14.)<sup>5</sup>

The difficulty of comprehending this Self is very well brought out by Sri Krishna himself.

"Some look upon the Self as marvellous. Others look upon it as wonderful. Others again speak of It as a wonder. And still others,

though hearing, do not understand It at all." (Gita, ii. 29).<sup>6</sup>

Thus does Sri Krishna teach Arjuna the philosophy of the Atman (Sankhya Yoga). Next he proceeds to draw the ethical implications of his metaphysics. Sri Krishna recognized long ago that a rational ethics must be based on the highest metaphysics. Mankind has been searching for a sanction for ethical discipline. Prophets and philosophers have offered various theories regarding ethical life. Unselfishness has been unanimously taught as the highest ethical virtue by all religions and philosophies alike. But whereas religions seek its explanation in the words of an inspired prophet or a revealed scripture, philosophers like Kant find it in the Categorical Imperative. Both these are unsatisfactory. Ethics could get no sanction from Kant's Pure Reason and its metaphysics. He fell back upon intuition and discovered the Categorical Imperative as the basis of all ethical endeavour. But the demand for a rational ethics is still there, and Kant's Categorical Imperative is nothing better, if not worse in its application, than ethics based on revelation. In India alone we have a metaphysics which explains the rationale of all ethics and morality.

Ethics have to solve the conflicts between the rival demands of self and society, selfishness and altruism. When ethics teach the suppression of self as the essence of moral life, it asks us merely to transcend the unreal and find our being in the real—the Sakshi. "Why should I

2. उपद्रष्टाऽनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चायुक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥

3. उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुजानं वा गुणान्वितम्  
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥

4. यस्य नाहङ्कृतो भावो बुद्धिरस्य न लिप्यते ।

हृत्वाऽपि स इमालोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥

5. मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तास्तितिक्षस्व भारत ।

6. आश्रयंवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनमाश्रयवद्ब्रूति  
तथैव चान्यः ।

आश्रयवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न  
चैव कश्चित् ॥

be unselfish?" asks the rationalist of to-day, expecting a rational answer. Because, "The self is a fever; the self is a delusion," as Buddha says. And since realization of Truth requires the attainment of the detached view-point of the Sakshi, ethical discipline must be combined with scientific and intellectual discipline for its fullest realization. To the discipline of the intellect which science insists in its pursuit of Truth must be added a discipline of the whole life covering every moment of one's existence. Life is a continuous struggle characterised by ceaseless activity. How to order life and its activities so that it may yield its fruit in the knowledge of Truth—is the great problem which faces all mankind. How to make work conducive to individual and social welfare? To this perennial problem Sri Krishna gives a solution which is at once original and unique in the history of thought—I refer to the teaching of Karma Yoga.

Before enquiry, man takes his ego or self as real, and all actions are judged from that standpoint. At this stage man works with various motives, and the highest of motives at the time of Sri Krishna was going to heaven, which was made into a philosophy of Karma Marga by the Mimamsakas. But philosophic enquiry destroyed the basis of this doctrine by showing the impermanence and unreality of the ego, and by the magic wand of his philosophy Sri Krishna transformed the Karma Marga into the wonderfully effective system of Karma Yoga. He showed that sacrifices and rituals are not the essence of an ethical life and placed life under the guidance of philosophy instead of the theology.

"The wisdom of Self-realization has been declared unto thee. Hearken thou now to the wisdom

of Yoga, endued with which, O son of Pritha, thou shalt break through the bonds of Karma." (Gita, ii. 39).<sup>7</sup> And he extols this Karma Yoga in these words:

"In this, there is no waste of unfinished attempt, nor is there production of contrary results. Even very little of this Dharma protects one from great terror." (Gita, ii. 40)."

We have already seen in a previous paragraph that the two characteristics of the real Self or Sakshi are, (1) Its detachment and (2) Its freedom from limited or circumscribed vision. We have also seen how scientific enquiry helps in a measure to attain this exalted view-point. We shall now proceed to enquire how ethical endeavour also finds its meaning and completion in this consummation. A deliberate conquest of the false self or ego is the *sine qua non* for the attainment of the true Self.

To this end Lord Krishna gives a twofold advice. (1) All works, whether pleasant or unpleasant, should be performed in the sense of duty. What does this imply? That work by itself is neither good nor bad, neither high nor low, but the preferences of the ego evaluate all work according to its whims. Through the sense of duty we disregard the false values which the ego has attached to work and thus transcend the ego itself. This helps us to realize the second characteristic of the Sakshi, *viz.*, freedom from limited vision, or, what amounts to the same thing, getting universality

7. एषा तेऽभिहिता साङ्ख्ये बुद्धियोगे त्विमां  
गृणु ।

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि॥

8. नेहमिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।  
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य वायते महतो भयात् ॥

of outlook. (2) By not caring for the fruits of our actions or by being unattached to them, we are asked to realise the first characteristic of the Sakshi—detachment. Sri Krishna condemns those who work with various motives as men of narrow intellect—‘Kripanah phalahetavah,’ and defines Karma Yoga thus: ‘Yogah karmasu kausalam.’ He extols those who do work in this spirit in these words:—

“The wise possessed of this evenness of mind, abandoning the fruits of their actions, freed for ever from the fetters of birth, go to that state which is beyond all evil.” (Gita, II, 51).<sup>9</sup>

Thus work for work’s sake, duty for duty’s sake is the first stage in ethical and spiritual discipline. There is still a higher phase of life which is taught in the Gita and which we find in no other scripture or philosophy in the world. Duty is the hard school where man learns to crucify his ego. This phase is characterised by ceaseless struggle and tension. But when the centre has been shifted from the ego to the Sakshi, duty fulfils itself and the individual works from the highest standpoint. The urge to break all bondages and fly into freedom compels one to criticise at a higher stage the concept of duty itself. Duty is certainly high; but there is an element of compulsion in it. We may call it inner compulsion (Categorical Imperative), or external compulsion, but compulsion it is. Hence it must be transcended. The man of duty is at best a disciplined slave. Hence the Gita teaches man to rise above even this duty and work as a free being. When one has disciplined oneself in the rigorous school of

duty, one becomes fit to work as a master. The Gita devotes many passages to describe this stage beyond duty:

“That man who lives devoid of longing, abandoning all desires, without the sense of “I” and “mine,” attains to peace.” (Gita, II, 71).<sup>10</sup>

“But the man who is devoted to the Self, and is satisfied with the Self, and content in the Self alone, has no obligatory duty.” (Gita, III, 17).<sup>11</sup>

“Whose undertakings are all devoid of the desire of results, and whose actions are burnt by the fire of knowledge, him, the sages call wise.” (Gita, IV, 19).<sup>12</sup>

“When the completely controlled mind rests serenely in the Self alone, free from longing after all desires, then is one called steadfast (in the Self).” (Gita, VI, 18).<sup>13</sup>

“He who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of “I” and “mine”, even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing, ever content and steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me,—he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me.” (Gita, XII, 13 and 14).<sup>14</sup>

10. विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।  
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥
11. यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।  
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥
12. यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।  
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥
13. यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।  
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥
14. अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।  
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥  
सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।  
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥

9. कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।  
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥

"He who is the same to friend and foe, and also in honour and dishonour; the same in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain; free from attachment; to whom censure and praise are equal; who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion—that man is dear to Me." (Gita, XII, 18 and 19.)<sup>15</sup>

When man attains the Sakshi consciousness, he finds life in an entirely new perspective. All the false values which the ego had attached to life and its functions, get destroyed, and they reveal themselves in their true forms. Such a life is the acme of ethical perfection. Man leaves far behind him all the struggles and joys and hates, competitions and sorrows, which is life to every one of us, and views life as a grand harmony, everything in tune with everything else and with himself. Then words of love alone fall from his lips, all his thoughts make for the good of the world, and all his actions seek the welfare of mankind as a whole. They are as Sri Krishna says, "Sarvabhutahiteratah" (ever interested in the good of all beings), and their works have always only one reference, "Lokasamgrahartham" (the welfare of mankind). Such men, in the words of Christ, are the salt of the earth.

In this philosophy and in this ethical teaching we have the meaning and explanation of all life's activities. Here I must mention one important feature of the Gita teaching—its synthetic note. Under the hegemony of his comprehensive

philosophy of life, Sri Krishna synthesises all the paths of Jnana, Karma, Bhakti and Yoga, and whatever other paths there be, by emphasising the essential nature and common feature of all these. Whether we are asked to surrender ourselves to God or to Guru, or work without any attachment, whether we are asked to calm the mind or analyse our thoughts, what we in essence do and achieve is the suppression of the ego which is the mask which Truth wears in every one of us. Whatever practices we do, if we once shift our centre of individuality to Sakshi, we go beyond all the dualities and struggles of life, and attain universality of outlook and breadth of heart. Not only that, all measure of large-heartedness and breadth of outlook we see in the world, bespeak only of this attainment in various degrees.

We have here in broad outline, the Gita teaching and its implications. One thing strikes us, and that is its non-sectarian and non-credal character. In whatever position of life we be, to whatever creed or religion we may belong, the Gita teaching is unlimited in its scope. It has only one message—the message of strength, a message which raises man to higher and higher levels of self-expression. It never seeks to make a Jew a Gentile, a Hindu a Christian or a Mohammedan, or a Westerner an Easterner, and *vice versa*. It appeals to every man and woman to apply its teachings to his or her circumstances and march towards the citadel of Truth, with only one warning, that is, not to rest content on the way. There is no crying quarter in the search for truth.

It is a happy augury for our times and for our nation that the Gita has become our national scripture. In these days of conflict,

15. समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।  
 शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥  
 तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मानी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।  
 अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिः भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो  
 नरः ॥



struggle and confusion, we want nothing so much as the inspiring words of Sri Krishna to show us our true goal and path—the same words that solved Arjuna's confusion. Momentous problems are there before us, which stagger the wisdom of the bravest of our Motherland. But if we can hearken to the counsels of Sri Krishna, and making Parthasarathi our Sarathi (charioteer), forge ahead with courage in our hearts and strength

in our muscles and nerves, the future of our Motherland is assured. It is our great good fortune that Sri Krishna has vouchsafed to us in Mahatmaji a typical and living example of his ethical teaching. Men like Gandhiji who live lives of selfless service are the real mainstay of a nation. Let us only hope and pray that such men are produced in greater abundance in future not only in India but also in the world outside.

## FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

*Svami Nirlepananda*

MY deeper acquaintance with our Bengal villages and the villagers' way of life at present, has made me very familiar with the inner psychology of their *attitude* towards the womenfolk. In the very heart of things there is something obdurately unreasonable and *slavishly tyrannic* about that. As situation stands now, the males in our society have been instrumental in almost perpetuating the natural weakness of the females and are condemning and ill-treating them on the very same score. This is the tragic aspect of the situation. Scientists say that female bodies are deficient in hormonal contents in blood.

Nobody can deny that book-education has its value. But in some cases it does not signify a reasoned outlook on life, or broadness and generosity of heart. There are the village orthodox folk, some of whom can quote before you piles of antiquated Sanskrit Smṛiti Slokas telling that sex-urge in women is ten or fifteenfold greater than in men. This is just a piece of wisdom coming out of this over-educated literate

class scrupulously keeping out of all progressive movements of regeneration.

Shortness of vision is very slow and hard to die away. They are now up to finish secretly as many child marriages as they possibly can, in spite of the recent legislation against it. Many of them have become aware of the fact that the law requires an amount of money-deposit to move *bonafide* on the part of a plaintiff to institute a suit on this score, which in cases of middle class people is prohibitive. In the few months before the Sarda Act found its place in the Statute Book we noticed in all neighbouring villages almost a feverish rush to transact nuptials of six months' old babies. The orthodox section was all-active at this period. It seemed as if the signal of a grim danger ahead was sounded, and all were up and doing and exceptionally enthusiastic to meet the emergency, as if to give a suitable reply to it with all the strength at their command. They hold very low and poor ideas about the morality of our girls. Some

tried to convince me that the Sarda Act would usher in a reign of social immorality. Our religion, they said, is in peril. They were strongly of opinion that girls of fourteen cannot remain chaste; that however much we may try to educate our girls the inferiority of womenfolk will remain as a part of a divine and just dispensation; that moral laxity and latitude of action is allowable in the case of men while women cannot be pardoned for lapses; that the latter are born only to cook, to rear children and to look after the domestic affairs and comforts of men; that however cruel and vicious the husbands may be, they are to be veritably worshipped as gods by their wives; that if girls attain puberty in their father's places before marriage, fourteen generations of their fathers will have hell in after-life; that the bad habit of drinking tea does no harm in the case of men but in women it is unpardonable. Such are in gist their confirmed views on the matter. We do not know if selfishness can go further than this.

Ramakrishna used to say that however much you may try to hurl your weapon on the back of a crocodile, the weapon would rebound without achieving its object. My trying to *reason* with them otherwise has convinced me of the practical truth of the above statement. But on our part, we must heroically and courageously push on, although these people will be trying their utmost to stem the tide of mental and social emancipation. For, we know that in the midst of the clash of adversaries and oppositionists, who are ultimately the truest friends of real advancement (provided both are sincere in their advocacy), the cause of truth and welfare will undoubtedly gather

newer and fresher strength day by day. For all attempts to keep away progressive ideas will be frustrated and crushed to dust. The voice of the majority is not always the voice of God, although for the time being it rules supreme and thereby *causes* so much agony and so much heart-breaking. The brave heart must plod on and struggle hard to establish the supremacy of justice and fair-play. The doors that are now banged will one day automatically be opened when there has been an adequate amount of knocking.

In the interior villages marriage of girls takes place generally at a much earlier age than in urban parts of Bengal. Let us recount a few eloquent, pertinent figures. Eighty-six out of a thousand are given away in wedlock while below ten years whereas in other parts of the province the age is twelve and a half. Here only two per cent females are literate and eight per cent males. The Bankura District occupies the sixth place among the thirty districts of Bengal in the matter of the spread of primary education. Out of a total of five lakhs of women, one and a half are widows. About the remarriage of widows which is now a hateful taboo but which undoubtedly existed in bygone ages in our land, we want to mention this much that each case ought to have a special prescription according to its requirement and that forced and compulsory widowhood is giving rise to moral lapses. Moreover, unless we have in our midst a class of vocal, literate widows we cannot really know the mind of this class on the problem. It would not do to foist our opinion upon them.

In the meantime a thing to be much regretted is that we are finding in our Hindu homes less of

active sympathy and arrangements for the moral and spiritual training of the girl-widows on the part of their parents or guardians. If a widowed girl of fourteen sees constantly before her very eyes that her aged mother of fifty and father of sixty are feeding fat over luxurious dishes and showing no willingness to part with the least amount of brightness, brilliancy and lavishness of dress, if she sees all her elders in merriment and indulging in excess of food, dress, drink and enjoyment, whereas hard and rigid ascetic discipline is demanded of her—to say the least, she is quite helpless in such an atmosphere. What can she do? There must be an environment of self-discipline, mortification, moderation, spiritual practices, meditation upon one's divine nature, if we want our girl-widows to be pure in life and manners. The way to curb one's animality is the same for everybody. If the group-spirit is full of purity, it is easy for the individual to be pure.

There have been before the country several institutions lately established to foster these habits and to meet the necessary demand. But what India and specially Bengal asks at this supreme moment of her national life, through the suppressed sobs and tears of these widows, coming from generation to generation, —is a thorough change in the attitude, treatment and viewpoints of the wielders of our social and household machinery, the heads and chiefs of our families. Will not our Grihasta-ashramas really deserve the sacred name they carry, and in real substance and spirit be once more full of the needed setting of pure moral moderation, if we seriously want continence, generosity, self-surrender and above all a life of sacrifice for others on the part of our widows? Let the guardians of

each one of this group ask themselves this question seriously once more and try to practically show sympathy for the cruel and hard lot of these. The keepers of social authority have to rebuild their mental frames in order to achieve this. If India wants to rise, her daughters—half of the nation—must rise to realise the spiritual destiny of our human selves through every avenue and by-path of life's manifold avocations. Healthy growth of womanhood in our country has been for ages deliberately, silently strangled, suppressed, and neglected. One meets with ample and convincing evidence of this, if he or she is in touch with the heart of the people, specially in the real India of villages. This outright disregard of Maha-Sakti has told heavily on our racial life. Ours has been so long a futile and foolish attempt to walk on one leg. We are prone to think that it is also one of the main under-current causes of our downfall.

The Svami Vivekananda has urged us all to help the regeneration and elevation of our masses in villages without *injuring* religion. By *religion* he distinctly and decidedly meant the *life-giving progressive ideals of spirituality* without which all glamour of scientific rationalisation of a mechanical civilisation is nothing. We are not to attempt to stick to and hug to our bosom all effete, enervating rites and ceremonies masquerading under the garb of faith and Dharma.

The nation lives in the cottage, the Svami has said, but alas! nobody cares for them. He meant by it that all that is healthy, all that is conducive to morality, sanitation, plain living and high thinking and spiritual idealism are to be meticulously supported and kept intact with all our earnestness—carefully

maintained, preserved, added to and emphasised hundred-fold. But all that in the name of faith and religion has a tendency of weakening and enervating the race, must be mercilessly brushed aside. Some of our daily customs and observances are excellent and worth preserving. For example, the extreme scrupulousness and rigidity with which the Seva of the cattle is enjoined upon, incidentally the ideal of Bhuta-Yajna, is admirable for the welfare of the race. The daily household practices of burning incense in the morning and evening and keeping things and places clean, tending carefully the Tulasi and other plants, the various *floras* for


the worship and decoration of the family deities, the regular repeating of the Lord's name by the family inmates, the sounding of conches and cymbals on ceremonial occasions, the chanting of sacred hymns with associations of purity reminding all and sundry about the spiritual ideal of life, observance of days of fastings enjoined upon the pious for their unfold benefits—physical, moral and supra-moral, the various festivals and Pujas which act as so many unifying factors bringing glee and merriment almost in every month of the year—are all so many means for the spiritual protection, encouragement, maintenance, growth and advancement of the nation.

## OUR EXPERIMENTS IN MORAL EDUCATION : ITS IDEAL AND PRACTICE\*

*By Swami Yatiswarananda*

*(Continued from the previous issue)*

### *The Need for a New Ideal in Education*

 HAVE made it clear that we look upon the human soul not as an automaton but as a living, self-conscious entity possessing an innate moral and spiritual nature, a fact that should not be lost sight of in any scheme of education that we may formulate. And this I have done in order to stress the great necessity of moral and spiritual culture without which no education is complete and fruitful. The conception of a merely intellectual education that is prevalent in our modern world needs a thorough overhauling. Seeing the evil effects of such an education one of our living Indian thinkers has observed,—“We have heard of the three R's

long enough. This fourth R of genuine religion (including moral culture) is more important than them all.” Many an educationist in the West is also thinking in a similar strain. “We commonly classify education,” says one, “under three heads,—primary, secondary and higher. To these three I should like to add a fourth, highest. The highest education is religion but that is also education.” Rightly does a thoughtful Western writer observe—“Both East and West seem to feel that an educational system that does not eventually lead a man out of the world of human affairs into the wider consciousness of spiritual things has failed in its mission and will not measure up to the soaring demand of the human soul.”

\* Paper written for the International Moral Education Congress held at Carcow, Poland, in September 1934.

An all-round education implies a true synthesis which, to quote the words of an English educationist, "must inevitably take into full and vivid account the significance of all forms of religion, and seek moral values in all." By religion which is inseparable from ethics we mean not doctrines or dogmas, forms or ceremonies, but the manifestation of the innate divinity in man, his sense of purity, sympathy for fellow-beings, ideal of true freedom, and also awakening of divine consciousness. All these may be likened to the ornaments of the soul, the glory of which man forgets through ignorance and lack of conscious control of his personality according to the highest knowledge and light.

Ordinarily, education and real culture do not go together. We become literate but not cultured. We become intellectual but not self-controlled. We become self-conscious but not altruistic. And even if we become moral, it is more out of fear and constraint than out of intrinsic goodness and purity. But true morality should be natural and not forced. It should be the self-expression of an inner principle and must have its foundations in the Divine in man. And hence there lies the greatest necessity for formulating a revised system of education that will combine physical and mental culture with soul-culture, and bring into existence a new type of men and women who, endowed with right knowledge, noble sentiments, controlled will power and a scrupulous sense of duty, will "work for their own welfare as well as for the welfare of humanity in general."

#### *To Discover the Ethical Principles in Ourselves*

I make bold to speak of an idealistic or even Utopian scheme of

education, as this Congress itself places before us the high ideal:— "To discover the age-long values which form the invisible bonds between peoples and generations, and to make them the groundwork of moral education." "To prepare the man of the future, the man, who free from hatred, will know how to work in love and contribute to the common good of all." "In the course of our systematic experiments along similar lines, we have found that the best way to awaken the faith in good and in unity is to "discover" them in our own souls which are in their essential nature free from all forms of evil but become immorally inclined as the consequence of forgetting their true glory and identifying themselves with the false."

There is no doubt that during the early stages of ethical culture there exists in us an interminable tug of war between the lower and the higher emotions in us. When the nobler sentiments gain the upper hand, we follow what the Upanishad calls the "path of the good," while when the baser feelings predominate we pursue "the path of the pleasant," the path of evil. "One thing is good, and quite different indeed is the pleasant. Good is attained by him who follows the good, but loses he the goal who chooses the pleasant." The conflict involved in avoiding the pleasant and following the good is gradually minimised as we pursue the higher course of life with an effort of the will and try to purify our understanding, sublimate our feelings and strengthen our will. Ethical life then becomes more and more easy and natural as the result of our giving up the false ego and regaining our true Self and realising our natural purity, and along with this we gain true Self-respect and

dignity that will make it impossible for one to stoop low to what is mean and vile. Thus having once lost the innate glory of the Self, we can discover and manifest it in course of time by following the right methods and means. We should always bear in mind that moral qualities are not things super-added to our nature by an outside agency ; they are instead the natural endowments of the true Self of man, the Divine Principle in us which can be realised through the performance of duty, the practice of sense-control, and mental discipline, through prayers, concentration and meditation—in short, through the scrupulous pursuit of the path of virtue in all its phases.

### *Metaphysical Foundations of Morals*

It is a pity that in the various fields of life and thought all over the world, we have enough theories to degrade and hate one another, but not to elevate and love one another. And the only means to counteract the evil influences that have become a menace to human society, is to realise the mainspring of true love and unity.

But we live in an age of criticism and scepticism. And very often people ask—‘Why should I not follow my own inclinations and impulses? Why should I be moral and love my fellow beings?’ Appeal to the authorities, religious prophets and scriptures are of no avail to them. They want rational explanations in order to be convinced. There are people who refuse to be impressed by any arguments, however reasonable they may be. But for those who are open to conviction, the only rational explanation is that purity and unity are not merely the laws of the prophets, but are also the laws of our very being

—the laws of the God within, the laws of the Universal Self, the Self of all. And these laws can be realised by subordinating the lower nature to the higher nature, the lower Self to the higher Self. The true seeker must be prepared to face the truth even if it be what is called metaphysical. The foundations of morals, according to the Vedanta, lies in the metaphysical fact of the unity of all beings in the Universal Self. Ethics thus comes to have not only a utilitarian value but also a philosophic support and a metaphysical justification.

We know from our experience that it is not possible for the average human being to be moral merely at the divine command. Something more is necessary in order to convince him, particularly when he wants rational explanations. Dr. Deussen, the German Vedantist scholar, speaking on this point has observed, “The Gospels fix quite correctly as the highest law of morality: Love your neighbour as yourself. But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer, he adds, is in the Vedanta, in the great formula—That (the Universal Self) thou art. It gives in three words metaphysics and morals in one. You shall love your neighbour as yourself, because you and your neighbour are in your real nature one and the same. With a deep insight does a Western author observe on this point: “Here.....we have deeply laid the metaphysical foundation of the duty of loving our neighbour and acting towards him as though he was our Self. *That thou art.* That is to say, there is a deeper inclusive Self, in which you and he are one: and loving service is the note or sign of this practical identity.”

The same idea is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita with reference to the man of God-vision. "Seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, he injures not the Self by Self," and, not only that, he becomes "engaged in the good of all beings." We have thus seen that the common source of all moral forces, of goodness and unity, lies within us, in the God within, in the One Self, in the Universal Principle of Existence and Light manifesting Itself in all and through all. In the recognition of this Divine Principle lies the hope of true fellowship and world-unity that we need so badly in our modern world.

#### *The Paramount Necessity for Moral Culture*

From what I have said already, I have made this fact clear that it is impossible for us to look upon ethical training and spiritual culture as things detached from each other, and these again as separate from general education. And when I speak of ethical culture alone, I do so, stressing certain facts which are in reality inseparable from and interconnected with spiritual practice. From one standpoint ethical discipline stands in between physical life and spiritual life, connecting the two. It enables the student to follow the right code of conduct in his contact with his fellow beings, and also to practise the right type of meditation and concentration with reference to his pursuit of the spiritual path. We whole-heartedly believe that without strict ethical discipline there can be no true spiritual life, as without it upright dealings with others are never possible in the course of the performance of the manifold duties of our life.

As I have already pointed out, in the average human beings like our-

selves, we find a combination of good and evil tendencies, and moral life usually means strifes and struggles between two opposite sets of thoughts and desires. And in the words of one of the Hindu Scriptures, "The stream of tendencies flowing through good and evil channels is to be directed by self-effort along the good path. When it has entered the evil path, it is to be turned towards the good path." Sometimes, the evil tendencies are as strong as the good ones. But for the higher evolution of our soul we should control the flow of energy along wrong lines and direct the energy so saved through better channels. So does Sri Krishna say in the Bhagavad Gita, "Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are common to man. Let none come under their sway, they are his foes." And real moral life is not a negative process. If it means a conscious withdrawal of the senses and the mind from the path of evil, it implies at the same time, also a conscious pursuit of the path of the good, the path of duty and virtue in thought, word and deed.

One may ask: What is ethical life? How to put it in a nutshell? What is the code of conduct that can be followed by all irrespective of all differences in life and thought? Manu, the Hindu law-giver, answers this question directly, "Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-covetousness, cleanliness, restraint of the senses from evil courses—this in brief is the path of virtue for all." All the great teachers and religions of the world speak of these virtues as of paramount importance in individual and collective life. And these qualities are, to quote the words of a renowned Hindu author, not merely other-worldly virtues. They are

of the greatest and most immediate *practical* use in *this* world. They are the cement which enables human beings to cohere in an organised society. As soon as they fall below a minimum degree in any community, that community begins to decay and break up."

*The Danger ahead and the  
Remedy*

It is a defect in our modern education that mental purity is not stressed as much as physical cleanliness, neither moral danger as much as physical danger. Nowadays there is a growing fear of the poison gas in all countries. Different kinds of masks and preventive measures are being devised for protection from it, and people are also being trained accordingly. This is all right. But along with it, we should also consider how men, women and particularly children are to be protected from the poisonous thoughts that rise from the hearts of the evil-minded, pollute society and bring about moral and spiritual, nay, even physical ruin.

And as the mechanisms of physical destruction are becoming more and more scientific and dangerous, so also the contrivances for moral and spiritual ruin are being made more and more scientific and deadly. What we need first of all is an awakening to the sense of the great danger that faces us. There is a widespread panic about the destruction that may be caused by scientific warfare. We should feel a greater panic thinking of the greater havoc that is being made by moral looseness and perversity amongst us.

May the Lord grant that we may fully recognise the immensity of the moral danger which is more disastrous than physical destruction. And it is only then that we shall take up moral education in right earnest and in a systematic way.

The time has arrived when we should realise fully that the forces of evil and immorality are fast growing in strength, and that these threaten the well-being, nay, the very existence, of our human society. It is the duty of all who see the dangers ahead, and believe in moral order and ethical life, to set aside all philosophical and theological differences, all national and racial prejudices and unite to work together in a spirit of co-operation and fellowship, for strengthening the forces of good through the spread of true moral education, and the salvage of our civilisation which seems to be fast sinking into the depth of the abyss. May the Lord save mankind from destruction! May He actuate us all with noble thoughts and make us follow the right code of conduct. In the words of the devotee let us all pray—

"May the world be peaceful,  
may the wicked become gentle!  
May all creatures think of  
mutual welfare! May all minds  
be engaged in what is good and  
auspicious."

And,

"Common be our prayer, com-  
mon be our end, common be  
our purpose, common be our  
deliberations."

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

(Concluded)

---



## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau

(Having dealt with the faults of other systems of philosophy, it is now proposed in this section to give a description of the philosophy of Non-duality.)

Of such nature is the world, as understood by Vedanta. Though external objects are absent, perception (of objects created by the mind) goes on, quite as well as if they were present (outside the perceiver). This subtle experience is quite well differentiated from the gross worldly experience, and as it is common to all creatures, is known as dream.

*Gaudapada's Karika* -

That is said to be beyond experience, where there is no object and no perception. Knowledge, the knowable and true Reality (Vigneyam) are proclaimed by the wise. (88)

*Sankara's Commentary*

That which is devoid of percept and perception is said to be beyond experience. Experience means the percepts and their perception. In the absence of these, there is sleep containing the seeds of future experiences. This is useful for the easy comprehension of the essence of Reality. That Gnana (Consciousness) by which one knows in succession the waking experience, the dream experience and sleep, is that which knows the three knowables; for anything other than these three is not knowable. All the fabrications of other schools of thought concealing (Brahman), are included in these three knowables. Vigneya is the true Reality which is known as the Fourth,

non-dual, unborn and of the essence of Atman. Thus the knower of Brahman describes all that begin with the waking experience and end with Vignoya.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

When one knows the Consciousness (Knowledge) and the three knowables one after the other, that man of high intellect will realise omniscience (Brahman) everywhere. (89)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Knowledge (Consciousness) has three knowables to know, beginning with waking experience. The first consists of the gross (with external objects as percepts). The second is more subtle on account of the absence (of gross external percepts). The third is what results from the absence of these two and is beyond experience. When the absence of these three states, one after another, is realised, there is the true Reality, which is the Fourth, non-dual, unborn, fearless: to the man of high intellect who realises this, in this world only, there will be omniscience. He is a man of high intellect, because his intellect grasps that which transcends experience. The knowledge once obtained, of the nature of one's own Atman, is not subject to any change. The knowledge obtained by realisation of the true Reality, is not like the knowledge obtained by the other

schools of thought, subject either to birth or destruction.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The thing to be avoided, the thing to be known, the thing to be acquired and the thing to be matured, are the four means preliminary to the attainment of true knowledge. Of these, except the thing to be known, the other three are mere fabrications of Avidya (ignorance). (90)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

To overcome a possible doubt, whether the three states of waking (dream and sleep), which are described as knowable one after another, are on that account to be considered real, the following is stated. The things to be given up are the three states of waking, dream and sleep which are superimposed on Atman, like a snake on a rope. The thing to be known is the true Reality, free from the four theories of existence, non-existence &c. The things to be acquired are the three means for the acquisition of true knowledge, namely, full knowledge of theory, child-like innocence and silence (concentration). These should be practised by the sage, free from the three desires (for children, wealth and fame). The thing to be matured, consists of the faults, such as, attachment, aversion, delusion &c., (which are to be got rid of by deeply meditating on their being obstacles to Moksha). These four things to be avoided, known, acquired and matured, are to be understood by the sage as the preliminary means (for Moksha). Of these, with the exception of the thing to be known which is one with Brahman, the others are to be regarded as fabrications of Avidya (ignorance). The three, namely, the things

to be avoided, acquired and matured, are regarded by the knowers of Brahman as not real.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

All (so-called) Atmans are naturally to be known as without beginning like Akasa. There is no variety in any form and place. (91)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The true Reality is naturally like Akasa, very subtle, unattached and all-pervading. The (so-called) Atmans are to be known by the seekers after release as beginningless and permanent. To remove any doubt suggested by the use of the plural (Atmans), it is said that there is not the least trace of any variety in any place and at any time.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

All Atmans are well-determined to be of the very nature of Consciousness, from the very beginning. He who finds peace in this way will attain immortality. (92)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

Though known, the Atmans are superimpositions and not real. To show this, the following is said. (Brahman) is naturally from the very beginning all Consciousness, just as the sun is always of the nature of luminosity. All Atmans are well determined to be eternally of the nature of (Brahman). That seeker after release (Moksha), who, in the aforesaid manner, has no doubt of his own nature stands in no need of knowledge and definition either for himself or for others, just as the sun stands in no need of light other than his own to illumine himself or others. Who thus finds peace always in himself, not finding any necessity for being taught, becomes fit for immortality.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

All Atmans are from the very beginning in peace, are unborn and by their very nature free from action. They are all alike and not different from one another. (Therefore) Moksha (or Santi) is unborn, is all alike and is wisdom. (93)

*Sankara's Commentary*

This is said to show that Santi (peace) is not a thing to be brought about in Atmans. Those from the very beginning rest in peace, are unborn and by their very nature are free from action, that is, of the very nature of eternal Moksha (release). Because of this, all Atmans are alike and not different from each other and of the pure essence of Atman. Therefore, Peace or Release is not a thing that can be fabricated. As it is always of one nature, such a thing as action cannot be conceived in it.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Where there is no wisdom, (people) always move about in difference only. Being convinced of differences, and talking of separateness, they are therefore known as narrow-minded. (94)

*Sankara's Commentary*

Those who realize the essence of Reality as described above, are high-minded. Those who are bound to differences, walk in the way of Samsara. Those who talk of many objects, are dualists. These are the narrow-minded people. Where there is no wisdom, they argue about differences and always walk in the path of duality, which is a fabrication of Avidya (ignorance). Therefore it is that they deserve the name of 'narrow-minded.'

*Gaudapada's Karika*

Whoever becomes convinced that (Atman or Brahman) is unborn and uniformly alike (without change) are known in the world as persons of high intellect. Ordinary people of the world cannot reach to that level. (95)

*Sankara's Commentary*

This essence of Reality cannot be understood by men of low intellect, by the unlearned, by those outside the pale of Vedanta, by the low-minded and by the unwise. Whoever, women and others included, becomes convinced of the Atman being unborn and uniformly alike (without differences), such people become in this world, men of high intellect with a knowledge of unsurpassed Truth. The essence of Reality known to such people, can never be grasped by worldly men of ordinary intellect. "Even the gods in seeking Him who is the Atman of all living creatures, who is alike in all, miss the true path and may be said to be seeking the foot-prints of one who has no feet." "The way is not seen like the path of birds flying in the sky," so the Smritis say.

*Gaudapada's Karika*

That is to be known as Gnana (Consciousness) which is itself unborn and remains unattached among Atmans (Jivas) which are also unborn. As it does not go about, Gnana (Consciousness) is described as unattached. (96)

*Sankara's Commentary*

What constitutes high-mindedness is described. Among the unborn and un-moving Atmans (Jivas), the unborn and motionless Consciousness remains like heat and light in the sun. Therefore

as it is unattached among the (surrounding) objects (and Jivas), it is said to be unborn. Consciousness does not move about among the objects (and Jivas), and for that reason it is described as being unattached, like the sky (to the objects in it).

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

In the minds of the ignorant, if there arises even the least trace of variety, there can never be unattachment. How can there be any release from bondage? (97)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

In the case of other schools of thought, in whom discrimination is wanting, even when the idea of the least trace of variety arises, among external or internal objects, there can never be unattachment. What is the use of speaking of release from bondage?

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

All Atmans (Jivas) are (really) without any bond (that is, obstructions to knowledge), as by their very nature, they are pure (free from blemishes). From the very beginning they are pure Consciousness and therefore are released. They are capable of being known. (98)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

(It is objected): By speaking of non-release from bondage, your (that is, the Advaitic) school of thought predicates the existence of some obstructions to knowledge. (To this, is replied): No, the bondages or obstructions are of the nature of Avidya (ignorance) and so the Atmans (Jivas) are free from all bondages. By nature, they are pure. From the beginning, they are Consciousness and therefore released. If you ask, how you speak of them

as 'knowable,' (we reply) because they are capable of being known. Just as we speak of the sun as shining, though the sun is of the very nature of luminosity and just as we speak of the mountains as standing, though they have no movement at all, so in this case.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

The knowledge of a knower does not move anywhere but is all pervading in the Atmans. So do all attributes and knowledge. But this is not what was said by Buddha. (99)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

The knowledge (Consciousness) of one who has realised Brahman, does not move out into objects but is centred in itself like light in the sun. It pervades everything like Akasa. All attributes of those deserving worship and of the wise belong to Atman which is all-pervading like Akasa and does not move into other objects (attributes). All that has been said above, is summed up here. The Consciousness of the Knower, all-pervading like Akasa, and the Universal Consciousness which is also all-pervading like Akasa, do not move out into any objects (attributes external to itself). So also are the attributes (unrelated to anything). Like the Akasa, the essence of Brahman-Atman is motionless, actionless, undivided, eternal, non-dual, unattached, unseen, incomprehensible, beyond hunger (and other desires). As the Sruti says, "The sight is never lost". Buddha did not speak of a thing which is devoid of the differentiation into knowledge, the knowable and the knower, the true essence of non-dual Reality. But the denial of external objects and their fabrication by mind, are near the non-dual Brahman. Such a knowledge of

non-dual Reality can be attained only by a study of Vedanta.

### *Gaudapada's Karika*

Having realised that condition which is devoid of variety, difficult to be comprehended, very sublime, unborn, uniform and essence of wisdom, we offer our salutations as best as we can. (100)

### *Sankara's Commentary*

At the conclusion of the treatise, we offer our salutations to praise the essence of Reality. It is difficult to be comprehended, as it is beyond the four theories formulated by various schools of Philosophy. Therefore it is very sublime, beyond the reach of the ignorant like the bottom of the sea. Having realised such a state without variety, unborn, uniform and full of wisdom, and having become one with it, we fall prostrate to do honour to it. Though beyond experience, we salute it from the point of view of ordinary experience.

### *Salutations to God and Teacher.*

I bow to the Brahman who dispels the fears of his devotees, who

though unborn, appears to be born through the greatness of his power, who though at rest, appears to be in motion and who though One, appears as many to those who under the influence of ignorance perceive the attributes of a variety of objects. (1)

I fall down at the feet of the supreme teacher, the worshipped of the worshipful, who seeing the creatures (Jivas) immersed in the ocean (of Samsara) infested with terrible monsters in the form of repeated births, through mercy to them, brought forth for their sake, this nectar, difficult to be found even by Devas, by churning the ocean of Vedas using the intellect as the churning rod. (2)

I hold in reverence with all my soul the purifying feet of him who dispels all fear of Samsara, by the light of whose intellect the darkness of illusion of my mind has been overcome and has disappeared, only showing itself above and below the waters of this terrible ocean of Samsara. Those who take refuge at his feet, obtain knowledge of Vedas (Srutis), peace of mind and humility, in plenty and at once. (3)

FINIS

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Hindu Ethical Ideals**

In his Kamla Lectures delivered recently at Madras Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar has covered all the important aspects of Hindu Ethics. He sheds the light of a mature and scholarly mind on many intricate and vexed problems of Hindu Ethics, and has as ably defended the fundamental principles of Hindu morality from the charges of ignorant foreign

critics as he has rescued it from the zeal of rigid orthodoxy. We shall give below his views on some of the important questions of Hindu Ethics.

### **The Sanction of Ethics**

In his first lecture, Sir Sivaswamy points out that the Hindu thinkers, like other ancients, do not trace the rules of ethics to any rational standards as modern writers on ethics

usually do. They base ethics on the firm rock of revelation that is the *Śrutis* or the *Vedas*. But the practice of the virtuous and the approval of the enlightened conscience too are according to the *Dharma Sastras* sources of unquestionable authority.

To lay the foundation of ethics on a revealed authority may not perhaps meet with the approval of many a modern mind, but it must be remembered that even those who claim to have freed themselves from the shackles of scriptural authority only transfer their allegiance to another form of authority, namely, the opinion of the society. Reliance on authority therefore seems to be the fate of the common man. A tendency towards rigidity will be the inevitable result of such a reliance, but the admission of the authoritativeness of the conduct of wise men and of enlightened conscience is more than enough to checkmate this tendency.

### **The attitude of Hindu thinkers towards Sex**

With reference to the attitude of Hindu thinkers towards sex he says: "Unlike Christianity Hinduism never attached any notion of impurity to sex. Marriage was regarded not as a concession to the weakness of human nature, nor was married life regarded as a morally inferior condition to virginity. No pre-eminence was attached to virginity as distinguished from chastity in the scale of virtues. Life-long celibacy was permitted but never enjoined as an ideal. The practice of asceticism in India did not have a degrading effect upon the general conception of sex in religion or in society.....The fact that anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity in India included both the female and the male elements is an illustration of the absence in the

Hindu mind of all notions of impurity about sex."

While this view is a fairly correct representation of the Hindu outlook on the question, it is however likely to give rise to certain misconceptions. It is perfectly true that asceticism in India has no degrading effect on the conception of sex, and that marriage is never looked upon as a concession to human weakness, as evidenced by the fact that it is called a *Samskara* that goes to purify the individuals concerned. But the very fact that it is considered a *Samskara* shows that the Hindu moralists never look upon marriage from a sexual point of view. In the Hindu ideal of marriage sex has a place only in so far as it is concerned with progeny; it does not in any way countenance the purely physical aspect of it. In fact, the maximum degree of self-control possible for the human being is the ideal that Hinduism places before man not only in matters of sex, but with regard to all the appetites of the body. Hence the Hindu moral codes measure the success of married life also according to the standards of continence, and prescribe *Brahmacharya* as a discipline to be followed even by the householder.

### **Remarks on Caste**

Regarding the origin of caste Sir Sivaswamy opines that all the Brahmanical theories as to its origin are either allegorical representations or speculative explanations of a pre-existing institution, that the institution is not the off-shoot of a theory, that the original divisions of *Varna* could have been only two—the fair-skinned Aryans and the dark-skinned Sudras—that when the division of occupation led to separate groups, and racial and occupational differences combined to help the formation

of separate groups, there must have grown up a tendency to use the words 'Varna' and 'Jati' in the same sense of exclusive group or caste.

The setting up of different standards of punishment for offenders of different castes, these punishments increasing in severity as the status of the offender is lower, is perhaps the most unjustifiable feature of caste system as enforced by the State in the past. While criticising this objectionable feature, Sir Sivaswamy also draws attention to the fact how in the midst of all those apparently unjustifiable rules in favour of the higher castes, there are certain cases at least in which the gravity of the offence increases in proportion to the status of the offender, and how in the case of theft, the fine on a Vaisya and a Kshatriya and Brahmin accused is twice, four times, eight or sixteen times respectively the fine of the Sudra. It is a thousand-fold, if the king himself is the thief.

### Ahimsa in Hinduism

Sir Sivaswamy contradicts the common notion that the solicitude of modern Hinduism for the life of lower animals is a legacy of Buddhism. He contends that the sanctity attached to all kinds of life and the duty of abstaining from any form of injury to living beings and showing compassion to all animals down to the smallest creatures is one of the essential tenets of Hinduism and that it is a mistake to say that the Brahmins borrowed these doctrines from Buddhism. What is novel in Buddha's teaching is not the doctrine of Ahimsa, but the condemnation of blood-sacrifices which the Vedic religion considers as exceptions to the general rule of Ahimsa. Though Buddha lays stress on the importance of compassion,

neither he nor his followers have any objection to the use of animal food. Nor is the Hindu altogether prohibited from taking animal food; even Brahmins did so in ancient times. Passages both in favour and against the use of animal food are to be seen in Hindu Sastras. The only explanation, Sir Sivaswamy opines, of this apparent divergence in the rules as to killing animals for food is that the Hindu moralists do not consider it unlawful provided it is done without needless cruelty. But abstinence from meat is considered meritorious.

### Karma and Relief of Suffering

In dealing with the doctrine of Karma, Sir Sivaswamy draws attention to the common criticism of that doctrine that it cannot justify the admiration of pain and suffering endured by men for the sake of others or the relief of suffering which is the result of man's own deeds. The mistake committed by such critics is that they ignore the fact that the doctrine affirms the freedom of the will. There is therefore place in it for the deliberate choice of suffering for the sake of others. Nor does the theory prohibit one from taking measures to relieve the sufferings that are due to a person's past misdeeds. For it does not ask man to go against his reason or act against the dictates of humanity. We may add in this connection that this criticism is as absurd as saying that if a boy gets indigestion by over-eating, his parents should not take measures to relieve him, because his sufferings are due to his own action.

### Vedantic Ethics and Manly Virtues

Another common criticism levelled against the ethics of Vedanta is that it lacks inspiration to streng-

then the manly qualities required for the practical side of life. As against this Sir Sivaswamy points out that there can be no better or more closely reasoned and eloquent call to duty than that contained in the second chapter of the Gita. Again these critics who are generally Christians forget the early history of Christianity, and seek an appraisement of other systems in the light of the life and thought of the 19th or 20th century. They ascribe to the influence of Christian ethics, movements that are due to the forces of scientific discovery, rationalism and the expansion of the range of human interests and sympathies brought about by modern improvements in the means of communication. This is unfair.

### **Are They Changes for the better**

Sir Sivaswamy considers the question whether the changes that have taken place in the ethical conception of the modern Hindu society are really changes for the better. While acknowledging the difficulty in answering this question, he thinks that while in the case of some virtues such as reverence and chastity there has been a decline, other virtues like self-sacrifice for the good of others and patriotism have been developed to a praiseworthy extent.

All will agree that the modern Indian is more patriotic than his fore-fathers. This does not however indicate any development of the intrinsic moral worth. While the spirit of service and self-sacrifice found expression in the smaller unit of the village in the past, it embraces a wider area to-day because of the growing consciousness of India as forming a single political unit. This has undoubtedly led to greater political consciousness, but has it

added to the moral bulk of the modern Indian? On the other hand, the growth of individualism and the influence of modern western education which encourage selfish ambition at the expense of spiritual values seem to counteract the spirit of unselfishness and disinterested charity.

### **Relativity in Moral Rules**

Sir Sivaswamy opines that no absolute standards can be fixed in formulating moral rules and ends, and that this has to be done in relation to the particular conditions of a country or an age. In illustration of this he points out that while individualism has become the bane of the West and has given rise to the counteracting forces of socialism and communism, in India where the joint family checks its growth, it has to be fostered to some extent. Similarly nationalism and patriotism are virtues to be encouraged and developed in India, while they have reached undesirable length in Europe and America and made them injuriously aggressive. Every European and American nation is fond of preaching to other nations the advantage of cultivating an international mind and throwing their doors open to an influx of foreign goods from countries which have long since attained industrial development and predominance, while they are themselves following a policy of economic self-sufficiency.

### **The Clash of Cultures**

In his sixth and last lecture on Hindu Moral Ideals, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar discusses the drift of modern tendencies and the future. He describes how the clash of Eastern and Western systems of civilisation and culture is creating far-reaching changes in our religious and ethical conceptions, our social



and political ideas, and our civic, national and economic ideals. Quoting Bertrand Russell the lecturer points out how a hundred and fifty years of science have proved more explosive than five hundred years of pre-scientific culture. A Rousseau or a Gandhi may preach the blessings of plain living and high thinking, but the common sense of even the country-side refuses to return to the old days and prefer the old-time bullock cart to the railway and the motor bus. Every institution and belief has now to submit to the challenge of reason and justify itself. "Religion has been obliged to make terms with the spirit of science. Fortunately for this reconciliation, science and religion are now alike inspired by a spirit of humility and decreasing dogmatism."

### Types of Religious Folk

Under the influence of these modern conditions India presents diverse types of religious beliefs. The lecturer finds it convenient to divide these into five classes according to the intensity and character of their beliefs: (1) the masses and women who are intensely religious and at the same time superstitious, (2) that section of literates and the educated who do not think of religion, but appreciate the convenience of conformity to established conventions, (3) the sceptics, (4) the revivalists who cling to all the old tenets and practices, discovering fanciful explanations under the guidance of allegory, symbolism or esoteric truths, and (5) the believers who accept the essential tenets of Hinduism and endeavour to reconcile their faith with the requirements of reason.

Taking all these facts into consideration, the lecturer still feels that the proportion of religiously-minded people in this country is much

larger than in any other country, and certainly not less.

### An Important Pronouncement

Sir Sivaswamy then proceeds to state that these modern influences have failed to create any inclination on the part of the Hindus to leave Hinduism and embrace some other faith. In a weighty passage, he declares :

"So far as I can see, there is no likelihood of any mass movement towards conversion of the Hindus to any other religion except perhaps in the case of the Depressed Classes who may be tempted to embrace one or the other of the proselytising religions, if the evil of untouchability is not soon eradicated. So far as the intelligentsia of the country are concerned, they believe that no religion can claim any intrinsic superiority over the others, that Hinduism is as capable of adaptation as other religions and that the guidance, which the purer forms of Hinduism can furnish in matters of religion and ethics, is quite as valuable as that to be found in other systems. Hinduism has far greater powers of accommodation than the other creeds of the world, and would have less difficulty in reconciling its philosophic basis with the conclusions of modern scientific thought."

### Remove the Load of Ritualism

Sir Sivaswamy then warns the Hindus that their religion will have greater chances of survival if they rescue the essentials of their faith from the burden of ritualism and ceremonial observances. In his opinion caste has little chances of survival under modern conditions. The fact that it has survived older attacks does not ensure its safety at the present day; for the new forces of nationalism and science are much

more powerful and penetrating than the previous attacks on caste. But, continues Sir Sivaswamy, the disappearance of caste need not affect Hinduism as a religion; on the other hand it would help the promotion of unity in India. That caste is disintegrating to-day is shown by the fact that modern Hindus are showing increasing disregard for its three main features, namely, restrictions on occupation, inter-dining and inter-marriage.

This observation of Sir Sivaswamy on caste is one to which we wish to draw the attention of those Hindus who designate themselves specially as Sanatanis. It is high time that Hindus should realise that Hinduism is called Sanatana Dharma not because its social structure is eternal, but because it embodies certain eternal laws of spiritual life. Caste in the social sense is the product of the social conditions of the past, and when those conditions no longer exist, it is also bound to pass away, as it is actually doing under our very eyes. Yet there are pious Hindus who cherish the baseless fear that with its disappearance Hinduism too will disappear. We must realise to-day that in the old social organisation of Varnashrama Dharma there are two kinds of law involved—Varna Dharma and Ashrama Dharma. These Varna Dharmas are the caste laws, and these are now passing away and are bound to pass away—because there are now no Varnas as understood in the past. The Ashrama Dharmas are more intimately related to man's spiritual growth, and these are to be preserved with such modifications as are required by our modern conditions of life. Hinduism as a religion is not going to suffer in the least by such a change. On the other hand it will only be strengthened, and exercise a greater appeal on people who are

at present outside the Hindu fold. There is a chance of a European or an American becoming a Hindu in the sense of accepting the Ashrama Dharmas in some form or other; but there is absolutely no chance at the present day of any people in the world, either civilised or uncivilised, accepting the Varna Dharma.

### Family Life .

Speaking about the conditions of family life to-day, Sir Sivaswamy refers to the rapid disintegration of the family, the startling changes in the long established notions of the relation between the sexes and the growing disregard for the codes of marriage and sexual ethics in western countries. "The causes of this upheaval of morals of Europe and America are the industrial revolution which drew young people away from their homes in the country and obliged them to live in towns and cities free from the control and supervision of the parents, the postponement of marriage till the parties became economically self-sufficient which denied to many people sexual expression just at the time when the urgency of the biological instinct was strongest, the emancipation of women, their objection to the double standard of morals for the two sexes and their desire for economic independence, the modern discovery of contraceptives which offer to the unmarried women a ready means of obtaining sex gratification outside marriage without risk of parenthood and the laws which make divorce easy."

It is instructive to note the views of such a veteran thinker and politician as Sir Sivaswamy about the possible intrusion of similar subversive forces into the family life of India also. It is too optimistic, Sir Sivaswamy thinks, for one to believe that these new ideas of morality will

not exert any influence over India, because they are against the spirit of Hinduism. So are they with the family ethics of Victorian England and America, but the force of circumstances and the modern economic conditions are now subjecting these countries to the full fury of these ideas. There is no reason to think that India would escape a similar result, especially as women in India are in a "feverish hurry to catch up western notions in politics and sociology and economics."

"The problem is how to check similar changes in India. Reactionary conservatives may advocate a reversion to the old policy of denying all education or at least higher education to women and keeping them under subjection of men. But such proposals are preposterous. Some may be inclined to think that even though it might not be possible to shut out knowledge of other kinds to women, this country should follow the Roman Catholics and strictly exclude any knowledge of birth control. But like other scientific inventions and discoveries, the methods of birth-control are capable of being put to bad as well as good uses and it would be absurd to deprive a people of a remedy not merely against the evils of over-population, but also against the evils arising from excessive child-bearing. It will be equally a mistake to postpone marriage to a later stage. In the West it is productive of great unhappiness and injury to morals. While economic independence is desirable on many grounds, it seems very unwise to encourage the ambition for a professional career in women, except perhaps in those who may be specially gifted for particular callings. The old Hindu ideal of the woman as the

maker of the home, which considers the position of the wife and the mother most sacred and honourable in society is one which we cannot afford to abandon, and it must be the ideal of woman's education in India to impress upon the minds of girls that exalted ideal. There is no need to fear that it will be found inadequate to the requirements of a rational, wholesome and happy life even under modern conditions. The Hindu conception of marriage may appear somewhat unromantic, but romances are unfortunately built upon illusions and do not last in this world of work, stress and realities. This does not mean, however, that no change is required in Hindu marriage laws. They are more liberal to men than to women; and it is necessary to provide the remedy of the dissolution of marriage to women as well as for men in cases where the maintenance of the legal bond would produce grave hardship. While avoiding undue facilities for such dissolution of the tie, it is necessary to avoid too great stringency."

In these very sober and well-balanced remarks, Sir Sivaswamy has touched upon many of the very controversial topics in modern social life. Especially the questions of birth-control and admission of women in general to professional careers are matters on which wide divergences of opinion are likely to prevail. But there is no gainsaying the fact that plans of social upliftment in any part of the world at the present day have to tackle these problems in all earnestness. It is a well-known fact that many modern States like Italy, Germany and Russia have made strong pronouncement on these questions, either in favour or against them. India too cannot afford to postpone them indefinitely.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE INDIA THAT IS INDIA:** *By Elizabeth Sharpe. Published by Luzac & Co., London. Pp. 110. Price 3 sh.*

The book, as hinted by its very title, claims to speak on India untouched by the new ideas and ideals that are transforming her in consequence of her coming in contact with the modern West.

It is not a complete picture or a serious and scholarly study of India, but gives glimpses of various aspects of Indian life at once colourful and sympathetic. The Purdah, the Zenana life of the princely aristocracy, polygamy, widowhood, the Jains, the Sadhus and the religious fairs, the untouchables and the Indian girl—these form the subject-matter of the book. It may be recommended as interesting reading for the parlour.

The motive of the concluding chapter is a bit dubious. The writer's taunting sneer on educated India demanding political freedom, for the mere fact that they are not liked by the orthodox for their now-fangled ways, is quite out of place, if not also impertinent. She ought to have known that some of the best champions of India's political rights are orthodox in religious and social sentiments. If Europe could outgrow her Mediaevalism, we do not see why India could not do the same.

**THE SAKTAS:** *By Ernest A. Payne, B. A., B. D., B. Litt. Published by Y. M. C. A. Publishing House, 5, Russel Street, Calcutta. Pages 153. Price, cloth Rs. 3-8, paper Rs. 2-8.*

Saktaism has been the object of violent criticism at the hands of western scholars, mostly because many of its elements are distasteful to them. This book written partly with a view to correct these unjust criticisms have fallen unconsciously into their rut. The author has concentrated on the 'dark,' 'crude,' 'repellent,' 'superstitious' side of the cult, and though occasional glimpses of its higher ideas are given, his obstinate refusal to

understand and appreciate the real principles of the Tantra which have been conspicuously omitted, is only too apparent. Naturally, the views of Sir John Woodroffe whose voluminous studies of the Tantras expound the real philosophy and theories of the cult have not been quite acceptable to the author, and his defence of the faith has come in for a good deal of criticism. The real difficulty with the author seems to be that he cannot appreciate the great achievement of the Tantras in ennobling and sublimating the crude cults prevalent among the uncivilised aborigines as well as the invaders, with which the philosophical religion of the Vedic Aryans came into contact, by imparting to them higher ideas of Godhead and organising the existing liturgies and sacraments with a system of symbolical and national worship, which attempt the author has wrongly found fit to call 'justification' and 'apology.'

Tantrikism stands alone among religions in having tried to lead the aspirant along the path of least resistance to the goal of religion by spiritualising even the animal passions through appropriate rituals, symbols, prayers and dedications, by building upon existing faiths and convictions and practices and raising them to philosophical levels, thus differing in this respect from dogmatic and missionary religions. Obscenities of the cult are obscenities in the brutal human nature; the fault of the Tantras, if it is a fault at all, is the fault of recognising this fact, and if it might have dragged down a few, its power to ennoble and sublimates the crude in a vast number of men has to be duly recognised. Failure to understand this has been the cause of much misplaced criticism by the author. The book is no less dogmatic in its condemnation of the worship of the terrible, while the only religion in the world which has dared to face the Truth without hugging pleasing superstitions has been the Sakta cult. Unless it be that

all religions are superstitions there is no point in calling Saktism a superstition, though its excesses and exaggerations are to be condemned.

The book gives a topographical description of the cult, its historical origin and growth, and comparisons with other mystery cults including Judaism and Roman Catholicism. It contains a variety of information about the cult, is critical and interesting and affords stimulating reading.

**TOWARDS TRANSCENDENCE:** *Published by Rameshwar De, Chander Nagore. Pp. 46.*

The articles in this book are claimed to be "the experiences of a seeker from the contradictions of a limited human mind to the effulgence of the Higher Mind following the path of a direct and original research." The book speaks of undiscovered possibilities

hidden in the deeper reaches of the mind which could be brought into the conscious plane by a process of transcendence of the various lower planes by which man becomes the superman possessed of great psychic powers, and later emerges with a still higher order of consciousness, as the Divine Personality.

**A GLIMPSE OF GAUTAMA (THE BUDDHA):** *By K. R. Menon. Published by A. Augustine, Yurindo Printing Works, 76 and 78, Waterloo Street, Singapore. 1934.*

This is a booklet depicting the chief episodes of Lord Buddha's life and his important teachings in rhymed English verse. The writer is no doubt full of devotion for the Great Master, which gives a charm to his writing, but we wish he had chosen some other medium of expression than English verse.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Birthday Celebration

The 100th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated as usual at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, on Sunday, the 10th of March. The Tithi Pooja fell on Wednesday, the 6th of March, and was observed by special Pooja, Homam and Bhajana. On the day of public celebration there was Bhajana all through the morning, and there was the feeding of Daridra Narayanas in the noon. The evening's programme consisted of an inspiring Harikatha Kalakshepam by Murthi Rao Bhugavata, which was followed by a public meeting presided over by Prof. P. N. Srinivasachariar, M.A., Principal of the Pachaiyappa's College. Mr. M. R. Shanmugasundaram, Avl., B.A., B.L., spoke in Tamil and Mr. G. Sundaram Aiyar, M.A., L.T., in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Message." The President in his concluding remarks gave a masterly analysis of the mystic experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. The day's proceedings terminated with Mangalarati and distribution of Prasad.

### Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras

The thirtieth annual report of the Home shows that it has made considerable progress in various departments during the year. Through the kind assistance of Janab C. Abdul Hakim Saheb Bahadur, a dormitory for accommodating 36 students of the Industrial section has been built. The strength of the Home, at the end of the year, was 154, classified as: Lower Secondary 40, High School 63, Industrial School 28, Arts Colleges 22, Medical School and College 2. The results at the public examinations were satisfactory. In the Industrial School, four students completed the final year course in Mechanical Engineering and two students of the third year were selected for training in the Royal Indian Air Force at Karachi.

The supervision of the boys was vested in the hands of the Ward Masters and the Warden, a Sannyasin of the Mission. In order to instil into them the habits of self-reliance and

service, the major portion of the household management was given to the charge of the boys themselves. Along with religious and moral training, physical culture also received proper attention. Regular classes in music were held, and all the Hindu festivals including the birthdays of the incarnations were celebrated in a fitting manner. The social and recreative activities were many-sided. The boys conducted three manuscript magazines, the Tamil, the English and the Arts magazines, with much credit. The Manual Training Classes in Carpentry, Weaving and Rattan Work, were also conducted efficiently and evoked the admiration of the Advisor to the Government on Vocational Education. The garden work was successful, as a mark of which, in the competition held by the Agri-Horticultural Society, the Home was awarded a prize. The library received important additions of books, the total number coming up to 7,213. The Industrial School and the High School have separate libraries of their own, which were also well used.

In the Industrial School a new section was opened, viz., the Automobile Engineering Course to train students for the L.A.E. diploma.

*The Mambalam Branch School* completed its second year showing satisfactory results. The strength rose from below three hundred to nearly four hundred, and the staff was also increased by the addition of more qualified teachers.

The present needs of the Home are three-fold: The improvement of the Permanent Fund; the full and up-to-date equipment of the Jubilee Workshop; and the development of the Mambalam Branch School creating a

permanent habitation for it. The total receipts were 39,529-0-5 and the expenditure Rs. 39,651-10-11, resulting in a deficit of Rs. 122-10-6 met from Revenue Reserve Account. Lastly the Management sends its fervent appeal to the generous public for sympathy and co-operation with a view to consolidate the activities of the institution and to enable it to cope with the increasing demands on its service.

### **The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Faridpur**

This Ashrama was originally started in 1921 in a rented house from where it was shifted to a site of its own in 1928. It conducts a free Primary School for depressed classes and an M. E. School for the girls of the locality. There is a small Students' Home consisting of 5 pupils. The Ashram also undertakes the nursing of helpless patients whenever necessary. During the period under review, anti-malarial and kala-azar injections were given twice a week and the Homeopathic Charitable Dispensary supplied medicines to the poor patients that came to its door. There is a free library. Religious classes are held every Sunday for the public. The Ashrama conducted flood-relief work in 1931-32 and spent Rs. 628 in relieving the distress of the afflicted persons. It is proposed to start an Industrial and Agricultural School where the boys will be taught agriculture, weaving, dyeing, carpentry, soap-making, umbrella-making and other useful cottage industries. Its many sided activities require substantial help. So the authorities appeal to the philanthropic public for liberal contributions and hearty co-operation.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

Vol. XXV. OCTOBER, 1938.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE.
Hindu Ethics ... ..	201
What is Bondage?— II ... ..	202
Reminiscences of the Holy Mother	
<i>By A Disciple</i> ... ..	208
Is Hindu Philosophy Living? .	
<i>By Jean Herbert</i> ... ..	210
Attunement with the One	
<i>By Swami Yatiswarananda</i> ... ..	219
Some Impressions of American Life	
<i>By Bhai Manilal C. Parekh</i> ... ..	223
Cult of Bhakti in the Mahabharata	
<i>By Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M A., Ph. D. P.R.S.</i> ... ..	230
Ārāda Bhakti Sutras	
<i>By Swami Thyagisananda</i> ... ..	236
Reviews and Notices ... ..	238
News and Reports ... ..	240

**NEW BOOK !**

**JUST OUT !!**

## INSPIRED TALKS

(4th Edition with an Index)

Records, in the very words of Swami Vivekananda, the course of spiritual instructions he gave to an intimate circle of western disciples. Presents the quintessence of Vedanta in a nutshell.

**Pocket Size  
Nice get-up**

**Flexible Binding  
Price, Cloth Re. 1-12-0  
Boards, Re. 1-4-0**

**Vedanta Kesari Office,**

**Mylapore,**

**Madras.**

# Swami Vivekananda's Works

## COMPLETE WORKS IN SEVEN VOLUMES

Each—Board Rs. 3.

Cloth Rs. 3-8.

### Index to Complete Works 0-10-0

	Rs. A.		Rs. A.
Hinduism	... 0 10	Thoughts on Vedanta	... 0 10
Raja Yoga	... 1 4	Epistles, I, II, III & IV	
Jnana Yoga	... 1 12	series, each	... 0 10
Bhakti Yoga	... 0 12	Do. V & VI each crown	
Karma Yoga	... 0 12	Size	... 0 8
The Science and Philosophy		Do. III & IV Pocket	
of Religion	... 0 12	each Edn.	... 0 6
A Study of Religion	... 0 12	The Vedanta Philosophy	... 0 6
Realisation and its		My Master	... 0 8
Methods.	... 0 10	Chicago address	... 0 4
The East and the West	... 0 12	Modern India	... 0 6
Religion of Love	... 0 12	Christ the Messenger	... 0 3
Indian Lectures (Colombo		Pavhari Baba	... 0 3
to Almora)	... 2 8	Reply to Madras Address	... 0 4
Inspired Talks	... 1 4	India and her Problem	... 0 10
Do. Cloth	... 1 12	Religion and Philosophy	
Women of India	... 0 3	Part I	... 0 12

***New Book!***

***Just Out!***

## SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD

By SWAMI THYAGISANANDA

One of the most inspiring of Upanishads simple and poetic in its setting, and harmonising the paths of Love, Knowledge, Concentration and Action. The present edition contains the Sanskrit text, paraphrase with word-for-word literal translation, English rendering and comments.

**Price As. 12**

*To Subscribers of V. K. 2 Annas less.*

**Sri Ramakrishna Math**

**Mylapore**

**Madras**









